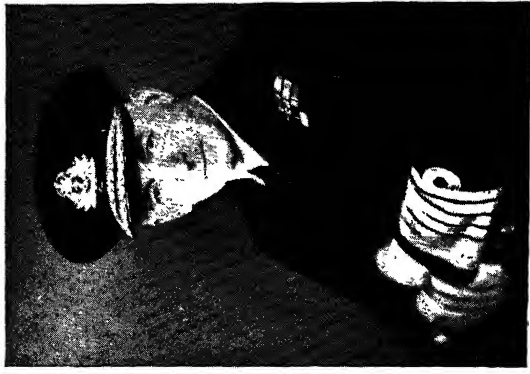


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THE LATE ADMIRAL OF THE
FLEET, SIR DUDLEY POUND



ADMIRAL SIR BRUCE FRASER



ADMIRAL LORD LOUIS
MOUNTBATTEN

A Record of the War

THE
SEVENTEENTH QUARTER

October, 1943—December, 1943

PHILIP GRAVES

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P R E F A C E

THE Seventeenth Quarter of the War was marked by further Allied successes. On the East European front the Russian counter-offensive went from strength to strength ; in the west the Anglo-American bombing of Germany continued to occupy an increasing portion of the *Luftwaffe*, to tie down nearly a million A.A. gunners and searchlight crews who might otherwise have reinforced the field armies, and to wreak increasing destruction on the enemy's factories, shipyards, and ports both in Germany and in the occupied countries. The U-boats suffered severely, the *Scharnhorst* perished off the North Cape. In the Mediterranean the Allies suffered minor but galling reverses in the Greek Islands, and their progress in Italy was slow, but the opening of a new front by local forces in Yugoslavia was some compensation for the divisions that the Germans had fostered there and in Greece. In the Far East the Japanese lost more outposts, and the first Cairo Conference recorded the decision of the English-speaking Powers and China to wage war against their predatory Empire until it collapsed. On the political side the Moscow and Teheran Conferences relieved some, if not all anxieties, although the persistence of the Russo-Polish deadlock was still a regrettable factor of uneasiness among the neutrals and the smaller Allied Powers.

I wish to express my gratitude here to my collaborators. Lieutenant-Colonel H. G. de Watteville has again dealt with the Russian campaign and the surprising failure of the Germans to "cut their loss" and retire betimes to a shorter line. Mr. Stanley Robinson has taken the place of Mr. S. W. Mason and has described the activities of our King, Ministers and Parliament. Sir Frank Brown has contributed a chapter on Indian affairs ; and the internal history of the United States of America, where the coming Presidential Election was casting a longer

shadow over Congress, has been clearly outlined by Mr. S. L. Righyni. I am also indebted to Mr. J. H. Freeman for his accounts of the situation in Germany and of developments in Occupied and Free France, and to Dr. R. Worsley for an interesting appreciation of the probable consequences of the Russo-Czech Treaty. I also thank the Naval, Military and Aeronautical Correspondents of *The Times* for much useful advice and its Map Department for its invaluable help.

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CHAPTER I

THE GRAND ALLIANCE

I : IN SOUTHERN EUROPE

While the American, British and Russian Governments were discussing the meeting-place and the agenda of the Conference between their Foreign Secretaries, two important events in Southern Europe aroused widespread interest among the Allied nations and extreme indignation in Germany. By the end of September extensive military preparations for the forthcoming manoeuvres had been completed and the Press emphasized almost daily that while no attack on Portuguese rights was apprehended, the national defences must be kept fully organized. The issue of equipment to the troops engaged in these exercises was so generous as to arouse general comment ; when the War Ministry mobilized private motor-cars for service, when Lisbon rehearsed a black-out on the night of October 10-11, when one of the largest British convoys seen for a long time by the Portuguese reached Lisbon with great quantities of coal¹, and when the authorities cancelled or delayed the sailings of several passenger ships, the public showed a friendly curiosity as to the meaning of these developments. The appearance of placards on walls in the capital bearing the words "Portugal preserves her neutrality, but the war has stretched all over the world. Portugal cannot keep away from what is happening throughout the world : our dignity and our interests may require that we end our neutrality ;"²—this was explicit enough and within 24 hours of the appearance of these placards it was made known that the Portuguese Government had consented

¹ On October 7. Fuel scarcity had been very marked since the outbreak of the war and these cargoes were most welcome.

² *The Times*, October 12.

to the temporary use by Great Britain of facilities in the Azores in order to further the protection of our merchant shipping in the Atlantic.

On October 12, Mr. Churchill informed Parliament that the Portuguese Government had agreed, at the British Government's request, to accord them these facilities. He began by telling the House of Commons that he had an announcement to make arising out of the treaty signed

"between this country and Portugal in the year 1373 between his Majesty King Edward III and King Ferdinand and Queen Eleanor of Portugal." After enumerating the various reinforcements of the original treaty during the succeeding centuries and reading its First Article, he said that this engagement had lasted nearly 600 years and was without parallel in world history. He had now to announce its latest application. "At the outset of the war the Portuguese Government, in full agreement with his Majesty's Government . . . adopted a policy of neutrality, with a view to preventing the war from spreading into the Iberian Peninsula." The Portuguese Government had repeatedly stated that this policy was in no way inconsistent with the Anglo-Portuguese alliance which they had reaffirmed in the early days of the war.

After explaining the object of the British request for the concession, the Prime Minister said that arrangements which entered into force immediately had been concluded between the two Governments. They concerned

(1) The conditions governing the use of these facilities by the British Government; and (2) British assistance in furnishing essential material and supplies to the Portuguese armed forces and the maintenance of the Portuguese internal economy. He explained that the agreement regarding the Azores was "of a temporary nature only," and that it in no wise prejudiced the maintenance of Portuguese sovereignty over Portuguese territory. All British forces would be withdrawn from the Azores at the close of hostilities. Nothing in the agreement affected the desire of the Portuguese Government to continue their policy of neutrality on the European mainland and thus maintain a zone of peace in the Iberian Peninsula. In the view of the British Government the agreement should give new life and vigour to the alliance which has so long existed between the United Kingdom and Portugal to their mutual advantage.

Mr. Churchill then read the friendly messages which had been exchanged by Mr. Eden and Dr. Salazar on the conclusion of the agreement and terminated his announcement with the words: "I take this opportunity of placing on record the appreciation of his Majesty's Government—which I have no doubt is shared by Parliament and the British nation—of the attitude of

the Portuguese Government, whose loyalty to their British ally never wavered in the darkest hours of the war."

The agreement had been concluded after negotiations carried out in the utmost secrecy. The Germans were in the dark until it was too late. The negotiations on the British side were directed under Mr. Eden, by Sir Ronald Campbell, our Ambassador in Lisbon, with the assistance of Mr. F. K. Roberts, head of the Central Department of the Foreign Office. It may be said at once that if reports concerning the action advocated in more than one transatlantic capital were well-founded, it was most fortunate that the British Government, who were faithful to the spirit of the alliance and had the highest opinion of the ability and character of Dr. Salazar, took charge of the negotiations from the first.

The Spanish Government had been duly informed of the negotiations in accordance with their treaty with Portugal and had kept the secret. The Germans protested on October 15 in a formal note to the Portuguese Government

"against their yielding military bases in the Azores under British pressure and thus committing a serious breach of neutrality. The Reich Government (the German radio announced) reserves the right to take the measures arising from the changed situation." The Japanese Government also protested against the concession as a violation of Portugal's neutrality. Neither protest, however, was followed by any action and neither Japan nor Germany broke off diplomatic relations with Lisbon. The agreement had a good Press in Portugal and in all free Allied countries. Mr. Roosevelt informed a Press Conference that he regarded it as highly important and gave it to be understood that the U.S.A. and other Allied nations would be beneficiaries under its terms.¹

The next event to be chronicled in this section evoked perhaps more interest, but (it must be admitted) much less enthusiasm in Allied countries than the service rendered to her ally by Portugal had done. After the meeting of Marshal Badoglio with General Eisenhower and his political and military advisers on board H.M.S. *Nelson* at Malta on September 29, Allied Headquarters, North Africa, issued a statement to the effect that the Allied Commander-in-Chief had met the Marshal to

¹ For the naval benefits of the agreement see Chapter IV, Section 1.

discuss military questions of mutual interest; that Mr. Harold Macmillan and Mr. Robert Murphy had been present as well as Admiral Cunningham, General Alexander, General Bedell Smith and Air Chief Marshal Tedder, and that the principal topic of discussion had been "the method for making most effective Italian military efforts against the common enemy." It was not expected that the Italians could give the Allies any support worth mentioning in the field. But for a small number of fanatical Blackshirts who had stood by the Germans, the Italian troops had no heart for any further fighting. They could, however, be of use in unloading ships and guarding lines of communication. But the statement pleased neither Greeks nor Yugoslavs, who had suffered much from the Italian invaders and feared that co-operation between Italy and the great Allies might leave her with the Dodecanese and parts of Dalmatia when peace came to be signed.

In this country there was much criticism, not confined to Left-wingers, of the lag between domestic developments in Italy and military events. Some feared a Darlan régime in Italy. Others pretended that the Allied Governments were not really anxious to see a Left-wing triumph in northern Italy and insisted that in any event their delays had prevented a democratic triumph. Assertions of this sort are as easy to make as they are hard to prove. They were based upon an under-estimation of the speed and decision with which the Germans acted and an absurd over-estimation of the ability of the Italian factions to give them really serious trouble, and of the willingness of the Italian people as a whole to take any serious risks on behalf of democracy, or the Allies—or anything else.¹ In any case the Badoglio

¹ The so-called revolutionary movement in northern Italy which broke out as the Germans marched in to restore order, was speedily snuffed out and appears to have caused them very little trouble. There was no widespread sabotage after the first few days. British prisoners of war who had obtained arms and thought of forming *guerillero* bands with Italian assistance, found that the Italians who joined them had for the most part no intention of fighting. They were quite ready to show the British the way over the Swiss frontier and to cross it themselves, but the prospect of fighting did not appeal to them.

Government could take decisions, give orders and maintain order. It was far from representative, and it was obvious that its basis would have to broaden before long. This, indeed, was the desire of the British Government, who felt that Italian morale required a tonic if the Italian people were to co-operate actively in expelling the Germans. For the present, however, all that they could do was to hope that the Italians would sooner or later "get their second wind."

On returning from Malta, Marshal Badoglio formed a new Cabinet. It was really a small military directorate. He remained head of the Government. His colleagues were :

C. G. S., General Ambrosio ; Chief of the Army Staff, General Roatta; Navy Minister, Admiral de Courtin ; General Sandalli, Minister for Air. The Duke of Aquarone, formerly Court Chamberlain, was appointed Minister for the Royal Household.

The inclusion of Generals Ambrosio and Roatta who were both accused of war crimes by the Yugoslavs, whether their allegiance was given to the Government in Cairo or to Marshal Tito's administration, aroused much criticism, which was by no means confined to the Balkan members of the United Nations. In the House of Lords (October 14) Lord Addison, in moving for papers, observed that while it might be necessary to accept Marshal Badoglio it was known that these officers were charged with serious war crimes by our Yugoslav allies. Nobody, he said, wished to condemn General Roatta unheard, but the place for such a man was not in a Cabinet.

At 3 p.m. on October 13 Marshal Badoglio made the following communication to General Eisenhower :

"I take great pleasure in informing you that his Majesty the King of Italy has declared war on Germany. The declaration will be handed by our Ambassador in Madrid to the German Ambassador at 1500 hours (Greenwich time) on October 13. By this act all ties with the dreadful past are broken and my Government will be proud to be able to march with you on to the inevitable victory. Will you be good enough, my dear General, to communicate the foregoing to the British, American, Russian, and other United Nations' Governments. I should also be grateful to you if you would be kind enough to inform the Italian Embassies in Ankara, in Buenos Aires, and the Legations in Berne, Stockholm, Dublin and Lisbon."

The instruction issued on behalf of the King of Italy to the Italian Ambassador in Madrid, the Marquis Paolucci de Calboli, was as follows :

"Your Excellency—You are instructed by his Majesty the King to communicate to the German Ambassador in Madrid, in order that he

may inform his Government, that in the face of the repeated and intensified acts of war committed against the Italians by the armed forces of Germany . . . Italy considers herself in a state of war with Germany."

Marshal Badoglio followed up his action by reading the following proclamation to the Italian people over the official Bari radio :

Italians,—With the declaration made on September 8, 1943, the Government headed by me, in announcing that the Commander-in-Chief of the British and American Forces in the Mediterranean had accepted the armistice requested by us, ordered the Italian troops to remain with their arms at rest but prepared to repel any act of violence directed at them from whatever source it might come. With a synchronized action, which clearly revealed an order previously given by some high authority, German troops compelled some of our units to disarm, while, in most cases, they proceeded to decisive attack against our troops.

But German arrogance and ferocity did not stop here. We had already seen some examples of their behaviour in the abuses of power, robbery, and violence of all kinds perpetrated in Catania while they were still our allies. Even more savage incidents against our unarmed population took place in Calabria, in the Puglio, and in the area of Salerno. But where the ferocity of the enemy surpassed every limit of the human imagination was at Naples. The heroic population of that city, which for weeks suffered every form of torment, strongly co-operated with the Anglo-American troops in putting the hated Germans to flight.

Italians ! There will not be peace in Italy so long as a single German remains on our soil. Shoulder to shoulder we must march forward with our friends of the United States, of Great Britain, of Russia, and of all the other United Nations. Wherever Italian troops may be, in the Balkans, Yugoslavia, Albania, and in Greece, they have witnessed similar acts of aggression and cruelty and they must fight against the Germans to the last man. The Government headed by me will shortly be completed. In order that it may constitute a true expression of democratic government in Italy the representatives of every political party will be asked to participate. The present arrangement will in no way impair the untrammelled right of the people of Italy to choose their own form of democratic government when peace is restored. Italians ! I inform you that his Majesty the King has given me the task of announcing to-day, the 13th day of October, the declaration of war against Germany.¹

In a statement to the Press issued from his headquarters, the Marshal said :

The Government of which I am the head was constitutionally nominated by his Majesty the King. My Government has the single objective to free the country from German oppression. It is obvious that this can only be done by united military effort in which we shall work in the closest possible manner with the British and American forces. For the full accomplishment of this objective all those who love Italy above all else must join together according to the best of their ability in this work of redemption.

My Government, which needs this help, undertakes to complete its task

¹ For German misbehaviour at Naples and elsewhere, cf. Chapter II, Section 1.

as soon as possible by calling upon the outstanding political personalities of the various parties so that it shall have a thoroughly democratic character. As soon as the war is ended and victory won as it most surely can be, the present Government will consider its mission accomplished and will be thoroughly content with having freed our country from German occupation.

Accordingly, the Government undertakes here and now to give formal assurance that at the end of the war the Italian people will be perfectly free to choose the Government which is desired for the no less important tasks of peace and reconstruction. This undertaking has already been given in the decree dissolving the Chamber of Fasci and Corporations in which it was stated that elections would be held four months after the end of hostilities. What was said then is reaffirmed now. The present Government has the clearly defined task of leading the country until peace has been won. With that its mandate will cease.

The following declaration was issued simultaneously in London, Washington, and Moscow, on the authority of the Governments concerned :

The Governments of Great Britain, the United States, and the Soviet Union acknowledge the position of the Royal Italian Government as stated by Marshal Badoglio and accept the active co-operation of the Italian nation and armed forces as a co-belligerent in the war against Germany. The military events since September 8 and the brutal maltreatment by the Germans of the Italian population, culminating in the Italian declaration of war against Germany, have in fact made Italy a co-belligerent, and the American, British, and Soviet Governments will continue to work with the Italian Government on that basis. The three Governments acknowledge the Italian Government's pledge to submit to the will of the Italian people after the Germans have been driven from Italy, and it is understood that nothing can detract from the absolute and untrammelled right of the people of Italy by constitutional means to decide on the democratic form of government they will eventually have.

The relationship of co-belligerency between the Government of Italy and the United Nations' Governments cannot of itself affect the terms recently signed, which retain their full force and can only be adjusted by agreement between the Allied Governments in the light of the assistance which the Italian Government may be able to afford to the United Nations' cause.¹

German comment was explosive. The declaration of war, said the German News Agency, made no difference to the situation. It was merely "the finishing touch to treachery."

The politics of those Italian provinces which were in Allied occupation or were subsequently won by the Allied armies and the state of Rome and the northern provinces are the theme of a section in Chapter VIII of this volume. Italian international relations during the

¹ The above texts are those given to the Press by Reuter's Agency.

remainder of the quarter will now be treated as concisely as possible. The appearance of Italy as a co-belligerent aroused some criticism in Great Britain, some mistrust in French North Africa, polite amusement in most neutral States, sharp comment in Yugoslavia and Greece, and indignation in Ethiopia. On October 17 the Emperor Haile Selassie spoke his mind to the Press.

He said that the alleged desire of the Badoglio Government to drive the Germans from Italy could not break the bonds which linked the Italians to their attempts to drive Ethiopians, Albanians, Greeks, Frenchmen and Yugoslavs from their homes. Marshal Badoglio himself, that "genius of poison gas" could not break the bonds that linked his name to the murder of Ethiopian children, the gassing of their villages and the fouling of their land. Ethiopia reserved her right to obtain satisfaction of her just demands. By the armistice Italy had accepted complete surrender, and she could not escape the just punishment of her crimes.

The Greek Prime Minister, M. Tsouderos, was caustic. He said (October 15) that his country had followed one sole principle, to fight to the end for the common victory without creating obstacles for her allies. Consequently, although she might have followed a policy which would have assured protection of her rights on territories of which she had been robbed by Italian rapacity during the previous 30 years and would have spared the feelings of Greeks who had suffered from "the savage and ignoble methods" of the Italians during the war and the occupation she had no intention of criticizing her allies' policy of admitting Italy to co-belligerency, if they regarded this as expedient. If questions concerning the political and administrative life of Greece were not touched and if she were not denied the priority to which she was entitled she would fight on without discussion or criticism.

On October 29 it was announced that Marshal Badoglio had signed the full armistice terms on September 29. They included 40 clauses setting forth conditions of a political, economic and financial nature.

On November 10 General Eisenhower issued a long statement explaining the form of Allied control for Italy. There would be three Allied organizations. First an Allied Control Commission had been formed.

This would be the chief directing and executive organization under the Commander-in-Chief. It would ensure fulfilment of the armistice terms and would develop Italian economic resources and man-power for the fight against Germany. Its acting Deputy President would be Major-General Kenyon A. Joyce of the U.S. Army who would be directly responsible to the Allied Commander-in-Chief. It was divided into four sections, (1) military; (2) political; (3) economic and administrative; (4) communications.

Secondly there was the organization for direct local military government, which had been called "AMGOT" (Allied Military Government of Occu-

pied Territory) but was now simply called A.M.G., an abbreviation for Allied Military Government. The officers of this body would follow the fighting front, taking charge of communities disorganized by the destructive retreat of the Germans, restoring civic life and clearing the way for further military movements towards the front. It was expected that this body would gradually give place to Italian administration, although this did not entail the return of Italian territory to unrestricted Italian control. On the higher level the control exercised by the Allied Control Commission would remain. The military mission headed by Lieutenant-General F. Mason Macfarlane, which had been appointed to the Italian Government at the time of the armistice, would now hand over its duties to the Control Commission.

Thirdly there was the Advisory Council for Italy, appointed in pursuance of the agreements reached in Moscow (*q.v.* Section 2 of this chapter for its functions). After describing its composition, representatives of the United Kingdom, the U.S.A., the U.S.S.R., and the French Committee of National Liberation, with a Greek and a Yugoslav to be added later, the General explained that this body would deal with day-to-day questions of a non-military nature and would make recommendations to co-ordinate Allied policy towards Italy. The Allied Commander-in-Chief made it clear that if the Italian Government could "broaden its political composition and strengthen its administrative structure" the transfer from Allied military government to Italian administration would keep pace with this development.

The members of the Advisory Council, Mr. Harold Macmillan (United Kingdom), Mr. Murphy (U.S.A.), M. Vyshinsky (U.S.S.R.) and M. Massigli (French National Liberation Committee) held their first meeting on November 29. No Greek or Yugoslav member had been appointed at the end of the year, an omission which might be explained by the lack of authority of the Yugoslav Government in Cairo and by Greek divisions, but was nevertheless the subject of some unfavourable criticism on the ground that it strengthened the belief that the "Small Powers," in spite of official statements to the contrary, would be allowed little or no say in the settlement of major political problems by the Great Powers.

On November 13 it was officially stated that General Mario Roatta had been removed from his post as Chief of Staff of the Italian Army. Answering a question in Parliament on November 10, Mr. Law said that our preliminary investigations into the cases of Generals Ambrosio and Roatta had been completed. "The Italian Government have been asked to remove General Roatta from his post. The case of General Ambrosio is still under consideration by the Commander-in-Chief."

After parting with General Roatta, Marshal Badoglio reconstructed his Cabinet on November 16 with Admiral de Courtin as Navy Minister and General Sandalli as

Minister for War. Six Under-Secretaries of State were appointed. They were :

General Orlando (War); Sr. Vitto Reale (Interior); Sr. Giuseppe Desantis (Justice); Sr. Guido Jung (Finance); Professor Siciliani (Agriculture); and Sr. Giovanni Cuomo (Education). On November 21, Marshal Messe, released from British captivity, was appointed Chief of the General Staff of the Combined Italian Forces. The new Cabinet, described as "a body of experts," had little if any more support among the inhabitants of Southern Italy than the Marshal's earlier Ministries.

2 : THE MOSCOW CONFERENCE

The opening of the preliminary conference of the Foreign Secretaries of the U.S.S.R., the U.S.A., and the United Kingdom was delayed for a short while, owing, it appears, to difficulties over the choice of a meeting-place. While it was still expected that Mr. Sumner Welles would represent the United States, the Americans were disposed to favour Moscow, while the British Government preferred London, as the more central rendezvous. They did not, however, raise any objection to a meeting at Moscow and it was understood that the envoys would meet there when the situation was changed by the resignation of Mr. Welles and the announcement that Mr. Cordell Hull, the Secretary of State, would represent his Government at the Conference. Mr. Hull is 72 years of age; it was doubtful whether his health would support the fatigue of long journeys by air across the Atlantic, North Africa, the Middle East and Russia; and the American Government now suggested a meeting in London. The Russians, who had made all their preparations for a meeting at Moscow, not unnaturally demurred to this change of venue and in the end they gained their point.

On October 12 Mr. Hull left for Europe and Mr. Stettinius, Mr. Welles's successor as Under-Secretary of State, announced his arrival in Moscow on October 18. He told the Press that the opportunity offered by the conference "to bring into even closer harmony the co-operation already existing between the United States and the British and Soviet Governments" was most welcome,

and that he was certain that the discussions would be frank and free.

The Russian newspaper *Pravda*,¹ which was reputed to enjoy official inspiration, although to a less degree than *Izvestiya*, did not, however, refrain from "ruling out" one subject of discussion, viz. the frontiers of the Baltic States, and at the same time insisted that the impending conference would deal principally with military and not with political issues. It said that all suppositions to the contrary

lost sight of the fact that the chief task of the United Nations at present was to bring the post-war period when international relations could be settled nearer, and that this could be done only by shortening the war. The British Press had been silent about the "chief and, indeed, the basic question which faced the Allies, viz. : the adoption of decisions to shorten the war by hastening Hitler's defeat." It attributed the spreading of obscure rumours about Soviet policy to elements hostile to co-operation between the United Nations and said that one manifestation of their hostility was publication of reports that discussions would take place concerning the frontiers of the U.S.S.R. and the status of the former Baltic States, although "everyone should know that the borders of the Soviet Union can no more be a subject of discussion than those of the United States or the State of California." The real task of the Conference was to strengthen the co-operation of the three Powers above all in the military field.

This was true in so far as the main object of the Conference was to secure the maximum of military co-operation between the three Powers. At the same time the violence with which the Russian Press, which was under infinitely stricter control than the British, attacked any manifestation of foreign interest in the unfortunate Baltic States or the Polish frontier seemed ominous to many British and more American observers.

Mr. Eden had arrived at Moscow with Mr. Hull. Mr. Donald Nelson, head of the U.S. Office of War Production, had visited Moscow and had been received by M. Stalin on October 15, but he returned to America during the following week. Mr. Hull and Mr. Eden had brought military experts with them and shortly after their arrival a new U.S. Military Mission under the command of Major-General John Deane was set up at Moscow to improve co-operation between the American and the Soviet forces.

¹ October 13.

M. Molotov presided throughout the Conference which opened on October 19. During its course no information was released concerning the discussions of the Foreign Secretaries save that they were making remarkably rapid progress. The Conference ended on October 30. On November 1 five declarations were issued at Moscow, the first and fullest of which gave the general results of the 12 meetings. After giving the dates on which the Conference began and ended, the number of meetings and the names of the Foreign Secretaries, it gave a list of the other delegates present. They were

For the United States : Mr. W. Averell Harriman, Ambassador of the United States ; Major-General John R. Deane, U.S. Army ; Mr. Green H. Hackworth ; Mr. James C. Dunn, and experts.

For the United Kingdom : Sir Archibald Clark Kerr, Ambassador ; Mr. William Strang ; Lieutenant-General Sir Hastings Ismay, and experts.

For the Soviet Union : Marshal K. E. Voroshilov, Marshal of the Soviet Union ; M. A. Y. Vyshinski ; M. M. M. Litvinov, Deputy People's Commissar for Foreign Affairs ; M. V. A. Sergeyev, Deputy People's Commissar for Foreign Trade ; Major-General Gryzlov, of the General Staff ; M. G. F. Saksin, Senior Official for the People's Commissariat for Foreign Affairs, and experts.

The agenda included all questions submitted for discussion by the three Governments. Some of the questions called for final decisions and these were taken. On other questions, after discussion, decisions of principle were taken ; these questions were referred for detailed consideration to commissions specially set up for the purpose or reserved for treatment through diplomatic channels. Other questions again were disposed of through an exchange of views.

The Governments of the United States, the United Kingdom, and the Soviet Union have been in close co-operation in all matters concerning the common war effort. But this is not the first time that the Foreign Secretaries of the three Governments have been able to meet together in conference.

In the first place there were frank and free discussions of the measures to be taken to shorten the war against Germany and her satellites in Europe. Advantage was taken of the presence of military advisers representing the respective Chiefs of Staff, in order to discuss definite military operations with regard to which decisions had been taken and which are already being prepared in order to create a basis for the closest military co-operation in the future between the three countries.

Second only to the importance of hastening the end of the war was the recognition by the three Governments that it was essential to their own interests and in the interest of all peace-loving nations to continue the present close collaboration and co-operation in the conduct of the war into the period following the end of hostilities and that only in this way could peace be maintained and the political, economic and social welfare of their peoples fully promoted.

This conviction is expressed in a declaration in which the Chinese Government joined during the conference and which was signed by the

three Foreign Secretaries and the Chinese Ambassador at Moscow on behalf of their Governments. This declaration published to-day provides for even closer collaboration in the prosecution of the war and in all matters pertaining to the surrender and disarmament of the enemies with which the four countries are respectively at war. It sets forth the principles upon which the four Governments agree that a broad system of international co-operation and security should be based. Provision is made for the inclusion of all other peace-loving nations, great and small, in this system.

The conference agreed to set up machinery for ensuring the closest co-operation between the three Governments in the examination of European questions arising as the war develops. For this purpose the conference decided to establish in London a European Advisory Commission to study these questions and to make joint recommendations to the three Governments.

Provision was made for continuing when necessary the tripartite consultations of representatives of the three Governments in the respective capitals through the existing diplomatic channels.

The conference also agreed to establish an Advisory Council for matters relating to Italy to be composed in the first instance of representatives of their three Governments and of the French Committee of National Liberation. Provision is made for addition to this council of representatives of Greece and Yugoslavia, in view of their special interests arising out of aggressions of Fascist Italy upon their territory during the present war. This council will deal with day-to-day questions other than military preparations, and will make recommendations designed to co-ordinate Allied policy with regard to Italy.

The three Foreign Secretaries considered it appropriate to reaffirm by a declaration published to-day the attitude of the Allied Governments in favour of the restoration of democracy in Italy.

The three Foreign Secretaries declared it to be the purpose of their Governments to restore the independence of Austria. At the same time they reminded Austria that in the final settlement account will be taken of efforts that Austria may make towards its own liberation. The declaration on Austria is published to-day.

The Foreign Secretaries issued at the conference a declaration by President Roosevelt, Mr. Churchill, and Premier Stalin containing a solemn warning that at the time of granting any armistice to any German Government those German officers and men and members of the Nazi Party who have had any connexion with atrocities and executions in countries overrun by German forces will be taken back to the countries in which their abominable crimes were committed to be charged and punished according to the laws of those countries.

In an atmosphere of mutual confidence and understanding which characterized all the work of the conference, consideration was also given to other important questions. These included not only questions of a current nature but also questions concerning treatment of Hitlerite Germany and her satellites, economic co-operation and assurance of general peace.

The second declaration of the four nations dealt with general security. The following is its text :

The Governments of the United States, the United Kingdom, the U.S.S.R., and China : United in their determination, in accordance with the declaration by the United Nations of January 1, 1942, and subsequent declarations, to continue hostilities against those Axis Powers with which

they respectively are at war until such Powers have laid down their arms on the basis of unconditional surrender ; conscious of their responsibility to secure the liberation of themselves and the people allied to them from the menace of aggression ; recognizing the necessity of ensuring rapid and orderly transit from war to peace and of establishing and maintaining international peace and security with the least diversion of this world's human and economic resources for armaments ; jointly declare :

1. That their united action, pledged for the prosecution of the war against their respective enemies, will be continued for the organization and maintenance of peace and security ;
2. That those of them at war with a common enemy will act together in all matters relating to the surrender and disarmament of that enemy ;
3. That they will take all measures deemed by them to be necessary to provide against any violation of the terms imposed on the enemy ;
4. That they recognize the necessity of establishing at the earliest practicable date a general international organization, based on the principle of the sovereign equality of all peace-loving States and open to membership by all such States, large or small, for the maintenance of international peace and security ;
5. That for the purpose of maintaining international peace and security pending the re-establishment of law and order and the inauguration of a system of general security they will consult with each other, and, as occasion requires, with other members of the United Nations, with a view to joint action on behalf of the community of nations ;
6. That after the termination of hostilities they will not employ their military forces within the territories of other States except for the purposes envisaged in this declaration and after joint consultation ; and
7. That they will confer and co-operate with one another and with other members of the United Nations to bring about a practicable general agreement with respect to the regulation of armaments in the post-war period.

Next came the declarations on Italy and on Austria. Their respective texts follow :

The Foreign Secretaries of the United States, United Kingdom, and Soviet Union have established that their three Governments are in complete agreement that Allied policy towards Italy must be based upon the fundamental principle that Fascism and all its evil influence and emanations shall be utterly destroyed, and that the Italian people shall be given every opportunity to establish governmental and other institutions based upon democratic principles.

The Foreign Secretaries of the United States and United Kingdom declare that the action of their Governments from the inception of the invasion of Italian territory, in so far as paramount military requirements have permitted, has been based upon this policy.

In furtherance of this policy in the future the Foreign Secretaries of the three Governments are agreed that the following measures are important and should be put into effect :

1. It is essential that the Italian Government should be made more democratic by the introduction of representatives of those sections of the Italian people who have always opposed Fascism.
2. Freedom of speech, of religious worship, of political belief, of Press, and of public meeting shall be restored in full measure to the Italian people, who shall also be entitled to form anti-Fascist political groups.

3. All institutions and organizations created by the Fascist régime shall be suppressed.

4. All Fascist or pro-Fascist elements shall be removed from administration and from institutions and organizations of a public character.

5. All political prisoners of the Fascist régime shall be released and accorded a full amnesty.

6. Democratic organs of local government shall be created.

7. Fascist chiefs and army generals known or suspected to be war criminals shall be arrested and handed over to justice.

In making this declaration the three Foreign Secretaries recognize that so long as active military operations continue in Italy the time at which it is possible to give full effect to the principles set out above will be determined by the Commander-in-Chief on the basis of instructions received through the combined Chiefs of Staff. The three Governments parties to this declaration will at the request of any one of them consult on this matter.

It is further understood that nothing in this resolution is to operate against the right of the Italian people ultimately to choose their own form of government.

The following is the text of the declaration on Austria :

The Government of the United Kingdom, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, and the United States have agreed that Austria, the first free country to fall a victim to Nazi aggression, shall be liberated from German domination.

They regard the annexation imposed upon Austria by Germany's penetration of March 15, 1938, as null and void. They consider themselves as in no way bound by any changes effected in Austria since that date. They declare that they wish to see re-established a free and independent Austria, and thereby to open the way for the Austrian people themselves, as well as those neighbouring States which will be faced with similar problems, to find that political and economic security which is the only basis for lasting peace.

Austria is reminded however that she has a responsibility which she cannot evade for participation in the war on the side of Hitlerite Germany, and that in the final settlement account will inevitably be taken of her own contribution to her liberation.

Last of the five came the declaration of the Three Powers on German atrocities. It ran :

The United Kingdom, the United States, and the Soviet Union have received from many quarters evidence of atrocities, massacres, and cold-blooded mass executions which are being perpetrated by the Hitlerite forces in many of the countries they have overrun and from which they are now being steadily expelled. The brutalities of Hitlerite domination are no new thing, and all peoples or territories in their grip have suffered from the worst form of government by terror.

What is new is that many of these territories are now being redeemed by the advancing armies of the liberating Powers and that, in their desperation, the recoiling Hitlerite Huns are redoubling their ruthless cruelties. This is now evidenced with particular clearness by the monstrous crimes of the Hitlerites on the territory of the Soviet Union which is being liberated from the Hitlerites, and on French and Italian territory.

Accordingly the aforesaid three Allied Powers, speaking in the interests

of the 32 United Nations, hereby solemnly declare and give full warning of their declaration as follows : At the time of the granting of any armistice to any Government which may be set up in Germany, those German officers and men and members of the Nazi Party who have been responsible for or have taken a consenting part in the above atrocities, massacres, and executions will be sent back to the countries in which their abominable deeds were done in order that they may be judged and punished according to the laws of these liberated countries and of the free Governments which will be erected therein. Lists will be compiled in all possible detail from all these countries, having regard especially to the invaded parts of the Soviet Union, to Poland and Czechoslovakia, to Yugoslavia and Greece, including Crete and other islands, to Norway, Denmark, the Netherlands, Belgium, Luxemburg, France, and Italy.

Thus Germans who take part in wholesale shootings of Italian officers or in the execution of French, Dutch, Belgian, or Norwegian hostages or of Cretan peasants, or who have shared in the slaughters inflicted on the people of Poland or in the territories of the Soviet Union which are now being swept clear of the enemy, will know that they will be brought back to the scene of their crimes and judged on the spot by the peoples whom they have outraged. Let those who have hitherto not imbrued their hands with innocent blood beware lest they join the ranks of the guilty, for most assuredly the three Allied Powers will pursue them to the uttermost ends of the earth and will deliver them to the accusers in order that justice may be done.

The above declaration is without prejudice to the case of the major criminals whose offences have no particular geographical location and who will be punished by a joint decision of the Governments of the Allies.

Although the last of the five declarations left something to be desired both in manner and content, the first comment in Great Britain, the Dominions and the United States on the results of the Conference of Moscow was favourable enough. The careful and confident wording of the first declaration concerning the military plans of the three Allies gave evidence that a closer understanding had been reached. British opinion was favourably impressed by the decision to set up a European Advisory Commission to be established in London, which filled a gap in the machinery of Three-Power collaboration. It was understood that the Commission would remain in permanent session or at least in permanent readiness to meet ; that it would examine European problems as they arose or before they arose and would make recommendations to the three Governments under whose authority it was to be constituted. Further the Four-Power declaration on the subject of general security was welcomed since, in the words of the Diplomatic Correspondent of *The Times* (*loc. cit.* November 3), the

Four Powers concerned had not expressed a hope or desire ; they "put the project on the plane of necessity" and this approach

"from necessity, is not only the true approach ; it is the one most likely to convince public opinion in America which, even before America's entry into the war, supported many moves when convinced of their necessity for America's security." The declaration of Austria, he added, with its reference to Austria's neighbours which would be faced with similar problems, "caused many . . . to wonder how far the Moscow delegates had considered the encouragement of inter-State arrangements in the Danubian and Balkan areas." It was perhaps a case of reading too much into a single phrase, but that phrase was suggestive and had caused comment.¹

The declaration concerning Italy might have been better worded in some respects. Thus Measure No. 3 of those which the Allies recommended should be put into effect might be stretched to cover *Dopolavoro*, or the organization charged with the draining of the Pontine Marshes, or certain laws concerning pensions and benefits, for which the Fascist Government had been directly responsible but which were not in themselves bad.²

Finally the declaration concerning war atrocities would have gained by a greater sobriety of language. "Hitlerite Huns" was a cliché and the use of the term "Hitlerite" for "German" deserves criticism. Moreover the statement that the three Allied Powers would pursue war criminals to "the uttermost ends of the earth" provoked the question whether they would fulfil their threat literally in the case of persons accused of such crimes who had decamped to neutral countries the Governments of which refused to give them up.

Nevertheless, the general impression left by the Moscow declarations in so far as they concerned the prosecution of the war and the organization of international security was good, although there were gaps, on the political

¹ And all the more so since the Russian Press which reflected official views with great fidelity showed the utmost aversion to the mere discussion of plans for the post-war formation of any sort of Danubian Federation or for the revival of the Balkan Entente.

² Some of the social legislation and of the public works inaugurated by the Fascists were planned by preceding democratic Ministries but carried into effect by their totalitarian successors, who piratically claimed the credit for them.

rather than on the military side, which obviously required to be filled.

In a statement to Parliament on November 11 Mr. Eden gave some account of the work done at Moscow to a congratulatory House of Commons. He said that while he could not add much to the published declarations

"the results of the conference exceeded my hopes. As we worked the sense of confidence grew. . . ." Looking back he could say with absolute assurance that their 15 days' work had brought a new warmth and new confidence into all their dealings with their Soviet and American friends. As to the measures designed to shorten the war "there was no tendency on the part of any of the delegates to dodge any of the difficult and important issues that these military matters raised." After calling the attention of the House to the importance of the declaration regarding world security, he told the House that the European Advisory Commission in London would be set up at once. It was an advisory, not an executive body. "For practical reasons" membership had been limited at the outset to representatives of the Three Powers, but the Commission, he said, "is not an instrument for imposing their views on others." The Advisory Council for Italy would be set up at once, and they had taken the occasion of the Conference to give their Soviet colleagues an account of the history of Allied military government in Italy and of the principles on which they had based it. "As regards the remainder of the agenda, it is sufficient to say that there was no major political question in Europe which was not the subject of discussion between us. . . ." He would not pretend that they had agreed about everything. "That would, indeed, be the national millennium" and setbacks and disappointments were inevitable, but what was more important was that their difficulties should be honestly and frankly faced. The association of the three Powers was based "on the firmest of all foundations, a common interest." There had been fears of a dictatorship imposed by the three Powers. He could assure the House that nothing of the kind was in their minds.

On November 18 Mr. Hull gave the Senate and the House of Representatives meeting "in temporary recess" an account of the Moscow Conference. While his address followed the same general lines as Mr. Eden's statement to Parliament, there were certain differences of emphasis as was natural in the circumstances. He particularly emphasized that there had been no secret agreements and that none had been suggested.

He drew special attention to the declaration on general security and said that the principle of sovereign equality of peace-loving States, irrespective of their size or strength, would be the foundation stone of the future international organization and that the adoption of this principle had been particularly welcome to the American delegation.

He described the declaration that after hostilities ended the four Governments would not employ their forces within the territories of others except for "the purposes envisaged in this declaration," and after joint con-

sultation as "an important self-denying ordinance." He said that the four Powers had pledged themselves to carry forward a broad, progressive programme of international co-operation; this meant that as the provisions of the declaration were carried into effect there would no longer be any necessity for spheres of influence, alliances, for the maintenance of the balance of power, or any other of those special arrangements whereby nations had striven to safeguard their security or to protect their interests.

In addition to these matters the Conference had given its preliminary attention to other questions and had exchanged views on such matters as the treatment of Germany, the promotion of social welfare and international economic relations. Other questions, those, for example relating to boundaries must be left "in abeyance until the termination of hostilities." He concluded with the words:

"As an American I am proud of the breadth and height of vision and statesmanship which have moved each House of the Congress to adopt by overwhelming majorities, resolutions in favour of our country's participation with other sovereign nations in an effective system of international co-operation for the maintenance of peace and security."

From Mr. Wendell Willkie came an equally whole-hearted welcome to the Moscow agreements which he put in their right perspective, not as a solution of the problems soon to confront the United Nations, "but as a fresh starting-point for the advancement of concrete plans."¹ He concurred entirely with Mr. Eden in emphasizing that the Powers participating in the Conference had no thought of imposing a three-Power or four-Power dictatorship over the post-war world. He also spoke in a more appreciative manner of British colonial methods than he had previously done.

Not all American opinion, however, was as optimistic as Mr. Hull and Mr. Willkie regarding the outcome of the Moscow Conference. On November 13 the Roman Catholic hierarchy in the United States issued a statement on the Moscow declarations.

These, they admitted, "do indeed open the way to necessary international co-operation for peace as well as for war," but "do not dispel the fear that compromises on the ideals of the Atlantic Charter are in prospect." The first principle of a sane reconstruction of society must be the recognition of God's sovereignty and moral law. International relations must be inspired by the ideal of human brotherhood, but this did not mean that "national rights and national sovereignties, rightly interpreted, must be surrendered to a world-government. It does mean that every nation and every people must recognize and satisfy its obligations in the family of nations."

It was thought that the statement reflected the anxiety felt in Roman Catholic circles and not only in Roman

¹ *The Times*, November 19.

Catholic circles in the United States as to the future of Poland, the Baltic States and other "small nations" of eastern Europe.

3 : THE CAIRO CONFERENCES

The Moscow meeting had paved the way for a Conference between the American President, Marshal Stalin and the British Prime Minister. It was decided that this should be held in the Middle East, and Persia, a country of equal political interest to British and Russians, was to provide the rendezvous. But before the three chiefs met it was of importance to arrive at an agreement between the Western Allies and China.

Here Russia could give no help. The Soviet Government were not at war with Japan ; in fact their relations with the Japanese were correct if on the cold side ; and they had every reason to remain at peace with these formidable neighbours while large German armies were still fighting on Russian soil and devastating the cities which they still occupied. A great part of the Russian army in Siberia had been shifted westward to aid in the struggle against the Germans. The forces left on the Amur and in Vladivostok were outnumbered by the Japanese in Manchuria, and while the Japanese could reinforce their Manchurian garrisons rapidly, the transport of troops and supplies—assuming that they could be spared—from European Russia to the Far East would be a relatively slow business. It was therefore impossible for the Government of the U.S.S.R. to take part in a military conference convened to discuss the Asiatic as well as the European and Oceanic plans of the United Nations. It followed from this that two conferences would be necessary, one between the Western Allies and China to deal with the problem of military co-operation against Japan, and one between the Western Powers and Russia for the primary purpose of co-ordinating the military offensives of the European Allies against Germany in the coming year.

Apart from these military reasons for a meeting with

the Chinese it was important to make personal contact with the Chinese Generalissimo. Mme. Chiang Kai-shek had incurred some criticism in the United States and her failure to reply to a British invitation to visit the United Kingdom suggested the existence of suspicion of or hostility to Great Britain in high Chinese quarters. The Chinese, too, needed definite assurances of greater support from the highest Allied quarters. They were suspicious of Russia, for, although the Russian consular authorities, once the virtual masters of Chinese Turkestan, had now acquiesced in and, indeed, had aided the restoration of Chinese authority, Outer Mongolia remained a possible bone of contention. Although the country had set up a Soviet system in 1924 and appeared to be a client-ally of the U.S.S.R., the Chinese Government had never abandoned their claim to suzerainty over this region, which claim, indeed, had been explicitly recognized by the Russian Government in 1925, a year after the establishment of the Mongol Republic. The then Foreign Commissar, M. Chicherin, actually said in a statement on Soviet foreign policy :

"The Soviet Government recognizes Mongolia as part of the whole Republic of China, enjoying, however, autonomy so far-reaching as to preclude Chinese interference with (its) internal affairs. . . ."

But in spite of this recognition of Chinese rights in Mongolia the Republic had not been able to obtain Mongol permission to send consuls or diplomatic representatives there. Another source of some Russo-Chinese friction was the non-arrival in Chinese territory of certain military equipment which had been sent to China through Persia and the Soviet Union.

More important, however, than these rubs and the belief cherished by some Chinese and, in their opinion, confirmed by criticisms in the Moscow review, *War and the Working Class*, that the indiscipline of the Chinese Communist armies was encouraged by Russia, were Chinese suspicions of the English-speaking Allies. The isolation of China since the British loss of Burma, the admission in British and American official quarters that the struggle with Japan would be a long and costly affair,

and the weariness engendered by a long war had promoted these suspicions. Many Chinese feared that the Allies would make peace "over their heads" with Japan and that China would be sacrificed. There were politicians, even at Chungking, who might not go so far as to desire a separate peace with Japan but urged that the Government should "go slow" until they were assured of effective aid from the British and Americans. Even among the Chinese leaders there was a singular suspicion of British designs on Tibet, though it was far from easy to understand why we, or any power, should covet that icy and unapproachable land.

The three leaders met at Cairo¹ in Conference on November 22. President Roosevelt and Mr. Churchill had each brought a strong delegation including a high proportion of military, naval and air experts. The Chinese delegation was smaller. Mme Chiang Kai-shek accompanied her husband and took part in most of the discussions as an interpreter. The Chinese delegation was the first to arrive on November 21. The British, 200 strong, reached Cairo that night and the Americans on the following morning. The general pattern of the Conference was that the Service delegations met separately in the mornings and jointly in the afternoons, while the heads of States and chiefs of Staff held separate discussions elsewhere. The Conference ended on November 26.

On December 1 it was announced in Cairo that

¹ Great efforts were made to ensure secrecy as to the date and place of the Conference and on December 1 the British Press was instructed to refer to "a conference in North Africa." News, however, leaked out to such an extent that Reuter's correspondent at Lisbon reported the principal facts in a message which reached Washington *via* London and was included in an American official programme to Europe. The American authorities were inclined to protest because the British Press had made a "scoop." Replying to questions in Parliament on December 2, Mr. Bracken, Minister of Information, said, *inter alia*, that these conferences should be "absolutely security conferences in future. . . ." He concluded by saying that the whole business should be straightened out "on a basis of absolute security. Journalists ought not to go to these conferences getting no news of any kind and wasting their time and their papers' time. If Governments were not willing to give them any news about these conferences, they ought not to invite the Press to be present."

President Roosevelt, Mr. Churchill and President-Generalissimo Chiang Kai-shek with their respective military and diplomatic advisers had concluded a conference in "North Africa" and that the following statement had been issued :

"The several military missions have agreed upon future military operations against Japan. The three great allies expressed the resolve to bring unrelenting pressure against their brutal enemies by sea, land and air. This pressure is already rising.

The three great allies are fighting this war to restrain and punish the aggression of Japan. They covet no gain for themselves and have no thought of territorial expansion. It is their purpose that Japan shall be stripped of all the islands in the Pacific which she has seized or occupied since the beginning of the first world war in 1914, and that all the territories that Japan has stolen from the Chinese, such as Manchuria, Formosa, and the Pescadores, shall be restored to the Republic of China. Japan will also be expelled from all other territories which she has taken by violence and greed.

The aforesaid three Great Powers, mindful of the enslavement of the people of Korea, are determined that in due course Korea shall become free and independent.

With these objectives in view the three allies, in harmony with those of the United Nations at war with Japan, will continue to persevere in the serious and prolonged operations necessary to procure the unconditional surrender of Japan."

The Declaration signed in Cairo showed that the Japanese Government would eventually be summoned and forced to restore both the territories overrun by their forces since the attack on Pearl Harbour, and those their predecessors had acquired by conquest or had occupied since the war of 1894-5 against the then Empire of China. Here is a list of territories won by Japan, from the end of that fateful war, in which the islanders invaded the Asiatic mainland for the first time since 1592, to the 'China incident' of 1937.

The Treaty of Peace between Japan and China signed at Shimonoseki on April 17, 1895, recognized the independence of Korea, which China had claimed as a vassal state, and gave Japan the island of Formosa and the Pescadores group. It also gave Japan the Port Arthur Peninsula (Liaotung) but this last cession was vetoed by the French, German and Russian Governments.

The Russo-Japanese War of 1904-5 was terminated by the Treaty of Portsmouth, U.S.A. (August 29, 1905) which recognized Japan's "paramount political, military and economic interests in Korea"; provided for the evacuation of Manchuria by both parties; transferred to Japan the lease of the Liaotung or Port Arthur Peninsula (which Russia had secured in 1898 from the Chinese Imperial Government) together with

the southern section of the Manchurian Railway from Port Arthur to Kwang-chengtze, and all collateral privileges; and ceded the southern half of the island of Sakhalin to Japan.

In 1910 after an insurrectionary movement brought about by the disbandment on Japanese "advice" of the Korean standing army, and the assassination of Prince Ito, the Japanese Resident-General, Korea was annexed to Japan by imperial rescript. This followed the murder of its Queen, the only politician with any character in this poor nerveless country, by Japanese "Ronin,"¹ who had broken into the Palace.

Japan entered the war of 1914-18 on the Allied side. Japanese forces besieged and captured the fortress of Kiaochow in Shantung which the Germans had "leased" from China and the Navy captured the Caroline, Marianne and Marshall Islands which Germany had purchased from Spain at the close of the Spanish-American War of 1898. In 1919 the Allied Powers granted Japan a mandate over these island groups. Japanese troops had contrived to occupy part of Shantung during the Kiaochow campaign and they remained there until after the Washington Conference of 1922.

In 1915 Japan had wrung important concessions from China by threats. Many of her "Twenty-one Demands" survived the Washington Conference from which she emerged still holding the leases of the Kwantung Peninsula, the South Manchurian Railway, and the Mukden-Antung Railway, and with the right to garrison the Peninsula and to provide military protection for the railways.

For some years pacific policies were in the ascendant but in 1927 the occupation of certain important areas in Shantung Province marked a change and by 1931 the militarists were in command at Tokyo. The stages in their next aggressions were :

- 1931. Attack upon the three Eastern Provinces of China (Heilungkiang, Kirin and Fengtien) which are occupied by Japanese forces.
- 1932. Part of Shanghai occupied. The three Manchurian Provinces enumerated above formed into the "independent" State of Manchukuo under Japanese protection. The Japanese also occupy Jehol Province in Inner Mongolia.
- 1937. Japan attacks and invades China and blockades the coasts.
- 1940. Japan joins the Axis (the Berlin Pact).

On December 7, 1941, Japan declared war on the United States and Great Britain and within six months had seized the Philippines, the entire Malay archipelago, part of New Guinea and the Solomons with other Pacific Islands, British Malaya, almost all Burma, and the Andaman Islands.

Such were the political decisions taken by the leaders of the chief Western democracies and by the Chinese President and Generalissimo. On the military side they had filled in the details of the plans which had been outlined at Quebec and on this occasion China, represented by General Chiang Kai-shek, had taken her place in the

¹ Literally "wave men," i.e. men without ties of allegiance, a picturesque mediæval term applied in modern Japan to "patriotic" gangsters.

forefront of the United Nations' planning. It was generally believed that measures for the forcing of the Burmese barrier between the English-speaking Allies and China were discussed.

"At the same time the hints which Mr. Roosevelt has given about the movements of fleets eastward, and the large attendance of naval leaders, suggest plans for by-passing the far-flung ocean outposts and for exposing Japan herself to attack."¹

The list of the principal members of the delegations at the conference permitted some interesting deductions. In addition to the American and Chinese Presidents and Mr. Churchill, they were :

United States. Admiral William D. Leahy, Chief of Staff to the President ; General George C. Marshall, Chief of Staff to the U.S. Army ; Admiral Ernest J. King, C-in-C., U.S. Fleet ; General Henry H. Arnold, Chief of U.S. Army Air Force ; Lieutenant-General Brehon Somervell, Chief of U.S. Army Services of Supply ; Major-General Edwin N. Watson, Secretary to the President ; Vice-Admiral Wilson Brown, the President's Naval A.D.C. ; Rear-Admiral Ross McIntire, Surgeon-General U.S. Navy, and the President's doctor ; Mr. Harry Hopkins, Lend-Lease Administrator ; Mr. Averell Harriman, U.S. Ambassador to Moscow ; Mr. Laurence Steinhardt, United States Ambassador in Turkey ; Mr. Lewis Douglas, Director, U.S. War Shipping Administration, and Mr. John McCloy, Assistant War Secretary.

Great Britain. Mr. Anthony Eden, Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs ; Lord Leathers, Minister of Transport, War and Shipping ; Lieutenant-General Sir Alan Brooke, C.I.G.S. ; Air Chief Marshal Sir Charles Portal, Chief of Air Staff ; Admiral Sir Andrew Cunningham, First Sea Lord ; Field-Marshal Sir John Dill, British military member, Joint Staff Mission in Washington ; Major-General Sir Hastings Ismay, C.O.S. to Mr. Churchill ; Lieutenant-General Sir Thomas Ridell-Webster, Q.M.G. to the Forces ; Sir Alexander Cadogan, Permanent Under-Secretary, Foreign Office.

China. General Shang Chen, Director, Foreign Affairs Bureau of the Military Affairs Council ; Dr. Wang Chung-hui, Secretary-General of the Supreme National Defence Council and former Minister of Foreign Affairs ; Lieutenant-General Chow Chih-jou, C.O.S. to the Chinese Air Force ; Vice-Admiral Yang Hsuan-chen, Head of the Intelligence Bureau, the Military Operations Board.

The political decisions taken regarding Japan had unquestioning approval in the United States. In this country, although it was understood that the Dutch Government and the Dominions had been consulted, it was felt that there might have been some recognition of the interest which the Netherlands share in the overthrow of Japan ; and that some more definite indication of the intentions of the three Powers regarding the Mandated Islands would have gratified the Governments of Australia

¹ *The Times*, December 2.

and New Zealand, countries which had played their part in the resistance to the Japanese assault and were particularly interested in the disarmament of these islands. It was, however, whispered in some quarters that the critics would have been much more worried had they read the original draft of the Cairo Declaration to which one of the British delegates was alleged to have raised strong and successful objections. There were others who wondered whether the Koreans, an unhappy race whom their own rulers had oppressed no less than the Japanese, would be fit for self-government for generations to come. These, however, were criticisms of the form rather than of the content of the Declaration and in general it was welcomed by public opinion.

The next Conference at Cairo was held after the Teheran meeting and was attended by the President of the Turkish Republic, President Roosevelt and Mr. Churchill. The Italian surrender, its effect on the situation in Greece and Yugoslavia, and the difficulties which the Allies were encountering in the Aegean, naturally inspired the hope that it might be possible to obtain facilities analogous to those granted by Portugal (*q.v.* Section 1 of this chapter) from our Turkish allies. After his visit to Moscow, Mr. Eden stayed for a few days in Cairo where he conferred with M. Noman Menemenjoglu, the Turkish Foreign Minister, who arrived in company with our Ambassador to Turkey. The Turkish Foreign Minister was received by the King of Egypt and saw Nahas Pasha during his stay in Cairo. He was also understood to have met Mr. Cordell Hull unofficially and the heads of the Greek and Yugoslav Governments. An official statement issued on November 7 ran :

"Mr. Anthony Eden, the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and M. Noman Menemenjoglu, the Turkish Minister for Foreign Affairs, met in Cairo on November 5 and November 6, 1943. An exchange of views on the general situation took place in the light of the results of the Moscow Conference. Conversations between the two Ministers were conducted in the spirit of friendship and alliance which binds the two countries."

This was not very explicit but it appeared that M. Menemenjoglu took advantage of Mr. Eden's presence so near Turkey to suggest that a meeting might be useful.

The Turks were naturally most anxious to obtain more detailed information about the Moscow discussions as far as they affected a general peace settlement and, more particularly, Turkey's neighbours, such as Bulgaria and Persia. They were particularly anxious to learn that the integrity and independence of Persia would be assured.

On November 17 M. Menemenjoglu addressed a meeting of the Parliamentary Group of the Republican People's Party. The group afterwards issued a statement to the effect that in Cairo the international situation had been examined by M. Menemenjoglu and Mr. Eden in an atmosphere of friendship and alliance, as were questions arising from the obligations of the Treaty of Alliance. The Foreign Minister had explained the Turkish attitude within the framework of the Treaty of Alliance with Great Britain. The Parliamentary group unanimously approved the Government's policy. This did not, however, elucidate the situation much more. Turkish Press comment was contradictory. Thus on November 20 M. Yalchin stated in an article in *Tanin* that the above statement had shown that the theory according to which Turkey would not fight was "meaningless" and that the Anglo-Turkish Treaty committed both sides. On the same date the *Son Posta* reported that the Foreign Minister had informed the diplomatic body of the results of his meeting with Mr. Eden and of the statement of policy which the Parliamentary group of the People's Party had approved. He was said to have intimated that the British Government had suggested that Turkey should fulfil her obligations under the Treaty of Alliance and that he had replied that conditions and circumstances prevented the Government from doing so at present. The Governments, it was reported, were exchanging views with a view to deciding under what conditions Turkey might become a belligerent.

On December 4, 5 and 6 a Conference took place at Cairo between President Roosevelt, President İnönü of Turkey and Mr. Churchill. Mr. Eden, M. Menemenjoglu and Mr. Harry Hopkins took part in the discussions. On December 7 an official statement was issued concerning the meeting. It ran thus :

"Participation in this conference of the head of the Turkish State in response to the cordial invitation addressed to him by the United States, British and Soviet Governments bears striking testimony to the strength of the alliance which unites Great Britain and Turkey and to the firm friendship existing between the Turkish people and the United States of America and the Soviet Union.

Presidents Roosevelt and İnönü and Prime Minister Churchill reviewed the general political situation and examined at length the policy to be followed, taking into account the joint and several interests of the three countries. The study of all problems in a spirit of understanding and loyalty showed that the closest unity existed between the United States of America, Turkey and Great Britain in their attitude to the world situation. The conversations in Cairo have consequently been most useful and most fruitful for the future of the relations between the four countries concerned.

The identity of interest and of views of the great American and British

democracies with those of the Soviet Union, as also the traditional relations of friendship existing between these Powers and Turkey, have been reaffirmed throughout the proceedings of the Cairo conference."

Whatever this may have meant, M. Menemenjoglu told the Press on December 8 that Turkish foreign policy remained "fundamentally unchanged" and that "Turkish non-belligerency as defined by the People's Party meeting of November 17 remains unaltered." He said that this Cairo Conference was "one of the most important events of this phase of the war," that the alliance with Great Britain had been greatly strengthened by the meeting, and that Turkish relations with the United States and the U.S.S.R. were now almost as strong as those with Great Britain. It certainly did not seem that Turkey was likely to take up arms in the near future. The public was now accustomed to non-belligerency and would not have been enthusiastic for war; the Turkish Air Force was still weak and Constantinople, Adrianople and Brusa, cities in which the Turks took great pride, were exposed to heavy attack from Bulgaria. The British failures at Leros and the evacuation of Samos, both caused by German air superiority over the Aegean, did not make the Turkish Government more ready to take risks by allowing the British facilities in Asia Minor. It was therefore improbable that Turkey would make any move for some time yet. Mr. Eden, indeed, surveying the Cairo and Teheran Conferences in Parliament, permitted himself to be hopeful. He said

"It was decided in Teheran to invite the President of the Turkish Republic to attend a conference with the representatives of the three Powers—the United States, Soviet Russia and ourselves—in Cairo. . . . The Turkish President accepted and he was accompanied by his Foreign Secretary and the Secretary-General of the Turkish Foreign Office. The British, the American and the Soviet Ambassadors in Ankara accompanied him. Unfortunately, M. Vyshinsky, who was to have been the Russian representative to join us in that capacity, was away at the front in Italy, so he could not reach us until after the close of the talks, but I was able to see him before I left Cairo, and I gave him a full account of all that had passed. . . ."

These conversations, Mr. Eden explained, "were in the nature of a fuller and more complete development of the earlier meeting that I had with the Turkish Foreign Secretary in Cairo five weeks ago. I clearly cannot, at this stage, give details of the confidential discussions. . . . But I can say that I have good hopes that they will be found to have established a sound basis for future co-operation between . . . ourselves,

Soviet Russia, America and Turkey. . . ." After referring to the Turkish Foreign Minister's statement as to the closeness of Turco-Russian and Turco-American relations, Mr. Eden continued : "Those who know the past history of this business will realize what an important statement that is. It augurs well, I think, for the progressive development of future relations between us four." Were it on account of this development alone, he would be justified in calling the second Cairo Conference encouraging. Further than that he could not go.

But what Mr. Eden did not and could not say, was that the Turks were watching the Russo-Polish situation with an anxious interest and that it was possible that their ultimate decision might be greatly affected by the manner in which it was settled.

NOTE.—For Mr. Eden's observations on the Conference with the Chinese President *see* Chapter IX, Section 2.

4 : THE TEHERAN CONFERENCE

The Conference with the Chinese President and Generalissimo was followed almost immediately by the meeting of Marshal Stalin, President Roosevelt and Mr. Churchill at Teheran. The first of the Cairo Conferences had closed on November 26 : on that day Marshal Stalin with what was described as "a small air fleet" landed on the Kalimergi aerodrome at Teheran. President Roosevelt and Mr. Churchill arrived next day. Strong delegations accompanied them. The names of the principal members of these delegations were :

The United States. Mr. Harry Hopkins, President Roosevelt's special assistant ; Admiral Leahy, Chief of Staff to the President ; Mr. Averell Harriman, U.S. Ambassador in Moscow ; Mr. J. Winant, U.S. Ambassador in London ; General Marshall, C.o.S., U.S. Army ; General Arnold, Chief of the U.S. Army Air Force ; Brigadier Hurley, the President's personal representative in the Near and Middle East ; Admiral King, C.-in-C., U.S. Fleet ; Mr. Charles E. Bohlen, Unites States Assistant Chief of the European Division of the State Department ; and the President's personal staff, which included Colonel Elliot Roosevelt and Major John Boettiger, his son and son-in-law respectively.

Great Britain. Mr. Anthony Eden, Foreign Secretary ; Sir Alexander Cadogan, Permanent Under-Secretary, Foreign Office ; Admiral of the Fleet Sir Andrew Cunningham, First Sea Lord ; Field-Marshal Sir John Dill, British military member, Joint Staff Mission in Washington ; General Sir Alan Brooke, C.I.G.S. ; Air Chief Marshal Sir Charles Portal, Chief of Air Staff ; Sir Archibald Clark Kerr, British Ambassador in Russia ; Lieut.-General Sir Hastings Ismay, C.o.S. to Mr. Churchill ; Lieut.-General Martel, head of the British Military Mission to Moscow ; and

the Prime Minister's personal staff. Mr. Churchill's daughter, Mrs. Oliver, accompanied him to Teheran.

The Russians, secretive as usual, did not publish any full list of their principal delegates, although they allowed it to be known that M. Molotov, Commissar for Foreign Affairs, and Marshal Voroshilov had accompanied Marshal Stalin. It was believed that Marshals Timoshenko and Zhukov were also among the Soviet delegates. Colonel-General Arcadieiev was in charge of arrangements for security during the Conference.

These arrangements were most comprehensive. The Germans had dropped parachutists in Persia some weeks before the Conference in order to create incidents and disrupt communications, and since not all of them had yet been rounded up, the Allies, and especially the Russians, took all possible precautions against an attack on the delegates. The ends of the street in which the Soviet Embassy and the British Legation stand were closed, wrote the Cairo Correspondent of *The Times*, by screens and great barbed-wire barriers.

Beyond them stood lines of British troops and in front of them armoured cars manned by Sikhs. Inside the Embassy grounds and on duty at the gates were American military police and Russian troops and secret police. The Russian guards were all officers, although they stood sentry and carried out regular guard routine. . . . Hundreds of O.G.P.U. police were scattered about the gardens [of the Soviet Embassy] and the domestic staff was also composed of O.G.P.U. men. Servants who went into the main conference room to clear up after a meeting bent down to sweep the floor, and exposed, strapped round their waists heavy revolvers. The closing of the street and the virtual joining of the Soviet Embassy and the British Legation, combined with the fact that the Russian delegates were living in the Embassy garden, made the conference one whole party and allowed free coming and going. . . . "Diversionary" movements were carried out in order to distract public attention. Thus when Marshal Stalin was about to call on the Russian Soldiers' Club, impressive police cordons and heavy military escorts were set up round buildings in another part of the town. "The Persian frontier was closed during the conference, the Teheran radio was off the air. In fact, Persia was cut off from the outside world."¹

The advantages of a concentration of the chief delegates in one area no doubt weighed with the American President when he accepted Marshal Stalin's invitation to stay at the Russian Embassy during the Conference. Mr. Roosevelt actually took up his quarters there on November 28 when the Conference opened. The meetings lasted four days, those of the Chiefs of Staff, which began early, being followed in the afternoons by the plenary Con-

¹ *The Times*, Cairo message, published December 7, 1943.

ferences. Besides the American President, Marshal Stalin, and Mr. Churchill, M. Molotov, Mr. Eden, Mr. Harry Hopkins, the British and American Chiefs of Staff and Marshal Voroshilov were present at all plenary meetings, some of which were also attended by Mr. Averell Harri- man, and Sir Archibald Clark Kerr. The Allied statesmen worked long hours ; it was recorded, for example, that Mr. Churchill and Mr. Eden worked together until 4.30 a.m. after the first plenary meeting of November 28 and that they were working until 2.30 a.m. on the following night. The delegations took turns to entertain one another at dinner and two ceremonies, not directly connected with the Conference, took place during its course.

The first of these, on November 29, was of a most moving character. It was the presentation by Mr. Churchill to Marshal Stalin of the sword which was the tribute of the King and the people of the United Kingdom to the garrison and people of Stalingrad. President Roosevelt and the British Chiefs of Staff and advisers were present at the ceremony. On one side of the conference room at the Russian Embassy was the British guard, 20 men of the Buffs commanded by a major. Facing them on the other side was the Russian guard of honour. At the head of the British line stood a lieutenant with the sword clasped in front of him. Marshal Stalin and Mr. Churchill entered the room almost simultaneously from opposite ends. The British Prime Minister, who was wearing the uniform of a commodore of the R.A.F., advanced to the centre of the room and stood there bareheaded. The Marshal advanced to meet him. After a Russian band in the adjoining room had played the *Internationale* and *God Save the King*, Mr. Churchill said :

"Marshal Stalin, I have the command of his Majesty King George VI to present to you for transmission to the city of Stalingrad this sword of honour of which his Majesty himself has approved the design. This blade bears upon it the inscription 'To the steel-hearted citizens of Stalingrad, the gift of King George VI in token of the homage of the British people.'"

Marshal Stalin's reply was made almost inaudible by his obvious emotion, but it was understood that he

expressed the deep appreciation of the Russian people for this honourable distinction from their British allies. The Cairo Correspondent of *The Times* gave the following description of the ceremony which followed (*loc. cit.* December 7) :

"The British lieutenant advanced with the sword held in his arms and placed it across Mr. Churchill's outstretched arms. The Prime Minister handed it to Marshal Stalin, who held it up, kissed the blade just below the hilt, and handed it to Marshal Voroshilov, who in turn handed it to the Russian lieutenant, who had moved forward with ceremonial step to receive it. The lieutenant, holding the sword shoulder high, turned about and marched back, with equally resounding stride, to the head of the Russian detachment."

November 30 was Mr. Churchill's 69th birthday. It was marked by a jovial dinner party at the British Legation at which President Roosevelt and Marshal Stalin were guests with members of the three delegations. Next day British and Indian officers and men doing duty at the Conference presented him with birthday gifts, a silver cigar-box of Isfahan work "from all ranks of Paiforce,"¹ an oval Isfahan silver tray "from the Buffs" and an Imami miniature in an ivory frame "from the Sikhs." After the presentation the Prime Minister called all close to him and spoke :

He said he was a stranger to Paiforce, but he knew what the troops had done there and what a worthy part they had played. "I hope and trust," he continued, "that the decisions we are making may play their part in shortening the war and enabling you to get back to your homes, east or west, wherever they may be."

The Conference ended with a dinner party at the Russian Embassy on the night of December 1 and early on the following morning the three chiefs departed by air on their several ways. Immediately on his return to North Africa on December 3, he conferred with General Wilson, C.-in-C., Middle East, Air Chief Marshal Sir Sholto Douglas, A.O.C. Middle East, and Major-General R. E. Laycock, Head of Combined Operations. Further conferences were held by the British and American Chiefs of Staff in Cairo. It was not until December 6 that the following important joint declaration was issued to the Press of the Allied countries.

¹ I.e. Persia-Iraq Command.

We, the President of the United States of America, the Prime Minister of Great Britain, and the Premier of the Soviet Union, have met these four days past in this capital of our ally Iran and have shaped and confirmed our common policy.

We expressed our determination that our nations shall work together in war and in the peace that will follow.

As to war our military staffs have joined in our round table discussions and we have concerted our plan for the destruction of the German forces. We have reached complete agreement as to the scope and timing of the operations which will be undertaken from the east, west, and south.

The common understanding which we have here reached guarantees that victory will be ours.

And as to peace we are sure that our concord will make it an enduring peace. We recognize fully the supreme responsibility resting upon us and all the United Nations to make a peace that will command the good will of the overwhelming masses of the peoples of the world and banish the scourge and terror of war for many generations.

With our diplomatic advisers we have surveyed the problems of the future. We shall seek the co-operation and the active participation of all nations, large and small, whose peoples in heart and mind are dedicated, as are our own peoples, to the elimination of tyranny and slavery, oppression and intolerance. We will welcome them as they may choose to come into a world family of democratic nations.

No power on earth can prevent our destroying the German armies by land, their U-boats by sea, and their war plants from the air. Our attacks will be relentless and increasing.

From these friendly conferences we look with confidence to the day when all peoples of the world may live free lives, untouched by tyranny and according to their varying desires and their own consciences.

We came here with hope and determination. We leave here friends in fact, in spirit, and in purpose.

Signed at Teheran, December 1, 1943.—

ROOSEVELT, STALIN, CHURCHILL.

Another declaration, less important from the world standpoint, but of great interest to the Persians and other nations of the Middle East, was published on the same date. This is its text : "Declaration of the Three Powers concerning Iran, December 1, 1943."

The President of the United States of America, the Premier of the U.S.S.R., and the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom, having consulted with each other and with the Prime Minister of Iran, desire to declare the mutual agreement of their three Governments regarding their relations with Iran.

The Governments of the United States of America, the U.S.S.R., and the United Kingdom recognize the assistance that Iran has given in the prosecution of the war against the common enemy, particularly by facilitating the transport of supplies from oversea to the Soviet Union.

The three Governments realize that the war has caused special economic difficulties for Iran, and they are agreed that they will continue to make available to the Government of Iran such economic assistance as may be possible, having regard to the heavy demands made upon them by their

world-wide military operations and to the world-wide shortage of transport, raw material and supplies for civilian consumption.

With respect to the post-war period, the Governments of the United States of America, the U.S.S.R., and the United Kingdom are in accord with the Government of Iran that any economic problem confronting Iran at the close of hostilities should receive full consideration, along with those of other members of the United Nations, by conferences or international agencies held or created to deal with international economic matters.

The Governments enumerated as before are at one with the Government of Iran in their desire for the maintenance of the independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity of Iran. They count upon the participation of Iran, together with all other peace-loving nations, in the establishment of international peace, security and prosperity after the war in accordance with the principles of the Atlantic Charter, to which all four Governments have continued to subscribe.

The declaration had a good effect in Turkey where the political future of Iran had been a subject of some anxiety, and also among the Persians though this somewhat sceptical nation was disposed to await performance before crediting each of the three Governments with an unreserved readiness to fulfil its obligations to their country.

The serious illness which overtook Mr. Churchill after the second Cairo Conference, as will be recorded in Chapter IX of this volume, prevented him from making any statement about the Conference at Teheran in Parliament. This task devolved on Mr. Eden who opened the debate on Foreign Affairs on December 14 with a review of the results of these conferences. Of the Teheran Conference he said :

"The first result is that the war will be shortened. The close co-ordination of all our military plans which was reached at the Conference will ensure it. . . . The Teheran Conference laid the plans to this end. . . . Every plan is now agreed, and the timing is now agreed, and, in due course, the decisions of the Teheran Conference will be unrolled on the fields of battle." Mr. Eden went on to say that this was not all since the Allies must stand together after the war and not fall apart as alliances had done in the past. That was certainly Germany's game, to sow doubts and dissensions among the Allies, and Germany would play it "from the moment the last shot is fired" with an eye on the next war.

The recurrent threat of war could only be met if there were "an international order firmer in strength and unity than any enemy that can seek to challenge it." Did the foundation for such an order exist? "Six months ago," said Mr. Eden, "I could not have given any certain answer. . . . But to-day I can give the answer. It is an emphatic 'Yes.'" The foundations did exist, and there was more than a possibility, there was a desire among the three Powers for continued co-operation "not only during the war, not only in reshaping Europe when the Armistice comes, but also

... in maintaining in the world an orderly progress and a continuing peace." The foundations of that understanding had been laid by them at Moscow, but they had been strengthened and confirmed at Teheran. "We three worked together. We have set our hands to the task, and heavy is our responsibility to ensure that we do not fail."

As examples of some of the results of the Teheran Conference, Mr. Eden pointed to the extension of the scope of the work of the Advisory Council for Italy, and the Advisory Commission for Europe, which was to sit in London. The Commission had just been completed by the nomination by his Government of Mr. John Winant, the American Ambassador to the United Kingdom, as the representative of the United States on that body. "These two bodies were planned in Moscow, but the scope of their work was greatly increased by the decisions taken at Teheran."¹

Well received by the House, Mr. Eden's statement was, nevertheless, too general to satisfy those inquisitive Members of Parliament or of the public who wished to know whether the English-speaking Powers had attempted to bring about a resumption of relations between Russia and Poland during the Conference, or were interested in the question of Finland and the Baltic States. It was rumoured, correctly or incorrectly, that the shadow cast by the American Presidential Election of the coming November was already so large that President Roosevelt did not feel able to lay the view of a large body of American opinion on these and kindred issues before the Russian leader. It was certain that there were no signs of any improvement in Russo-Polish relations—if the non-existent can be said to improve or to deteriorate—between the close of the Conference and the New Year.

It may be of interest to record that on December 6 M. Mikolajczyk,² the Polish Prime Minister, made a statement of importance, in that it gave some indication of the Polish view of the Teheran Conference. After stating that Poland, who had been fighting the Germans the longest and the most unyieldingly, was awaiting the moment of liberation with a special longing, and that the declaration of the three Powers presaged a speedy end to the war in Europe, he continued :

Poland, with her fuller experiences of many wars, deeply desires not only a speedy victory but a lasting peace. That is why we attach special importance to those points in the declaration which indicate that it will be

¹ The passages quoted above are taken from *Hansard*, House of Commons vol. 395, No. 11, 1428-30.

² Pronounce 'Mickolaychick.'

lasting. It will be all the more lasting if—as the declaration of these three Powers states—real co-operation and active participation by the great nations and the small exists among the family of democratic nations. In particular, the determination to keep to the principles of the Atlantic Charter and eliminate tyranny, slavery, intolerance and oppression awakened a deep echo in Polish hearts. Through her struggle Poland has proclaimed her membership of the world family of democratic nations from which tyranny and slavery, oppression and intolerance will be driven out. We also express the conviction that in the liberated territories these democratic principles will be put into effect immediately.

We greet with especial joy the declaration concerning Iran taking her contribution to the common cause into consideration and guaranteeing her independence, sovereignty, and territorial integrity, for in that declaration, as in the resolutions taken by the Conference concerning the Pacific guaranteeing to China the return of all territories stolen from her, we see the fulfilment of the basic conditions for true peace which, if it is to be lasting, cannot be built on any wrongs, including territorial wrongs. I am convinced that these precedents, repeated in other cases, will give the best results in building a lasting peace and unity among the nations after the war.

This did not seem to mean that the Polish Government would never discuss the revision of their country's eastern frontier but that they would not recognize any unilateral decisions on that subject and that they trusted that the Russians, should they enter Poland, would not try to set up a puppet Government there. It must be admitted that the apprehensions of certain other exiled Governments of the smaller Powers were not entirely calmed by the declarations issued after the Teheran Conference. When Mr. Eden spoke of the desire among the three Powers for continued co-operation between them "in reshaping Europe" when the Armistice came, some of them wondered what precisely was the meaning of that rather cryptic phrase. In general, however, the results of the Conference of Teheran were welcomed as a proof that the three Powers fully realized the necessity of closing their ranks against any German attempt to sow dissension between them.

5 : THE SOVIET-CZECHOSLOVAK PACT

By R. H. Worsley

On December 12, 1943, "an agreement of friendship, mutual assistance and post-war co-operation between the Soviet Union and the Czechoslovak Republic" was signed

at Moscow by M. Molotov and Ambassador Fierlinger in the presence of Marshal Stalin and President Benesh. It consists of six articles worded in the manner of the Anglo-Soviet Treaty, and of a separate "protocol." These are its main provisions :

- (1) "Military and other assistance and support of every kind in the present war against Germany" and her satellites ;
- (2) "The solemn obligation not to enter into any negotiations with Hitler's Government during the period of the present war or with any other Government in Germany which does not explicitly renounce all aggressive intentions, and not to conduct negotiations or to conclude, except by mutual consent, any armistice or peace agreement with Germany or any other Government united with her in acts of aggression in Europe ;
- (3) "All military and other aid within its power . . . in the event of one of them finding itself involved during the post-war period in a war with Germany, should the latter revive her *Drang nach dem Osten*, or with any other State which should unite itself with Germany either directly or indirectly in the waging of such a war ;
- (4) "Close friendly co-operation during the period after the re-establishment of peace, upon action which will conform to the principle of mutual respect for each other's independence and sovereignty, and upon non-interference in the internal affairs of each other. They shall develop their economic relations on the largest possible scale, and render each other every economic assistance after the war ;
- (5) "An undertaking' not to conclude any alliance or to take part in any coalition directed against the other ;"
- (6) The "agreement shall remain in force for a period of twenty years and continue for a further period of five years" unless "one of the contracting parties, 12 months before the expiration of the said period of 20 years, gives notice of its desire to terminate this agreement."

The "protocol" reads as follows :

"The U.S.S.R. and the Czechoslovak Republic agree that in the event of any third State which has common frontiers with the U.S.S.R. or with the Czechoslovak Republic, and which in the present war has been the object of German aggression, desiring to become a party to this agreement, such State shall be given the opportunity, with the sanction of the U.S.S.R. and the Czechoslovak Republic, of signing this agreement, which thereby would acquire the quality of a tripartite agreement."

The Treaty deserves attention for many reasons ; It is the first long-term and comprehensive treaty concluded between Allied Continental States during this war ; and it is also the first visible evidence of a policy based on full acknowledgment of the increase of Soviet power and of the Kremlin's desire to play an adequate part in the future affairs of Europe. As *The Times* Special Correspondent in Moscow put it (on December 12, 1943) :

"Like the decisions of the Moscow and Teheran conferences this treaty marks for the Russians another stage towards entry into a full share in European affairs, and makes a popular appeal to the reviving sense that Russia has a great mission . . . on the Continent."

Obviously anticipating a Soviet-Polish understanding on a new border, he continues: "the frontiers of Czechoslovakia and the Soviet Union will touch over a considerable length"—which was not the case before the war—and he remarks that the Agreement

"is envisaged by both partners as the first foundation of order in a zone where a liberated Czechoslovakia is likely to be the only point of stability in the immediate post-war period."

In the words of President Dr. Benesh (in his Fourth Message to the Czechoslovak State Council in London on February 3, 1944), the Treaty is "one of the factors in a post-war security system, another important factor being . . . the Anglo-Soviet Treaty of March 26, 1942." Public opinion, however, in this country and in the U.S.A. was not united on the agreement. The comments of the British Press were friendly but non-committal, those of part of the American Press rather critical. In both cases, however, there was a tendency to present the Soviet-Czechoslovak Pact as an event of greater regional than general importance.

Is this view correct? What is the meaning of the Pact? What advantages does it give to the partners? How far does it serve European interests?

In the first place it must be understood that the treaty will have far-reaching effects which are by no means limited to the immediate neighbours of the Soviet Union. It is a political and economic document of the first order. The Soviet Union is the strongest military Power in Europe; Czechoslovakia is the main industrial country of East Central Europe and will be, after the destruction of Germany's economic potential, one of the main centres of European industrialization. The famous sentence, "the master of Bohemia will be the master of Europe," comes back to memory. It cannot be excluded that the close collaboration envisaged in the Soviet-Czechoslovak Pact between the two countries, may have

a similar effect on the European position of the Soviet Union as the *Anschluss* had on Germany. In any case, the fact that a Continental State formally and demonstratively acknowledges the Soviet Union as the leading European Power must have an important bearing on the policy of the small nations between the Baltic and the Aegean. It is clear that they must, by force of circumstances, gravitate toward the new combination. In actual fact, the Soviet-Czechoslovak Pact appears to be the nucleus of an "Eastern Pact," the same "Eastern Pact" which international Statesmen failed to secure as a supplement to, and an essential completion of, the "Locarno" Pact. This Eastern Pact is acquiring additional importance on a Continent the political post-war structure of which is still conjectural.

On the regional bearing of the Agreement, opinion is divided. For Czechoslovakia, according to President Benesh (February 3, 1944), it

"is a permanent safeguard against any new expansion of pan-Germanism against the German *Drang nach Osten* and *Lebensraum* policies. It is a guarantee of frontiers, and a guarantee that Munich shall never happen again. In a word, it is an outstanding guarantee of independence . . . such as has never been vouchsafed" to the Republic.

According to the same authority the extensive economic co-operation for which the Treaty provides, will

"mean a considerable change in Czechoslovakia's pre-war commercial and industrial orientation but will also mean . . . a new economic independence especially of Germany and her future influence."

The Czechoslovak Government in London is already engaged in comprehensive preparations to ensure the application of the Treaty in all its bearings after their return home.

What of the other States of the zone? The past months have shown that the problem of Soviet-Czechoslovak-Polish relations has not been brought any nearer solution by the Pact and its "Protocol." *The Times* (December 14, 1943) rightly observed on that issue :

"indeed it is not too much to say that the beneficial effects of the Russian-Czechoslovak Treaty cannot be felt to the full until Poland takes her place in the process of necessary adjustment. Good neighbourliness is hardly conceivable without her."

The effects of the Pact on the other States of the zone are a matter for speculation. For the Soviet Union and for Czechoslovakia, the Pact creates important political and economic possibilities. For Czechoslovakia, in particular, being the first Central European nation privileged to conclude an agreement with the Kremlin on post-war policy, it justifies hopes of occupying a leading position in Central and South-Eastern Europe. There is also the idea of "Slavonic Unity" the attraction of which to Slavonic peoples must not be underrated. On the other hand, a long-term view cannot disregard the lesson of East-Central European history past and present. The question is whether the best system of security for this part of the world is to be found in the deliberated development of good neighbourly policy among its nations, followed by an understanding with one or several Great Powers ; or whether the procedure should start the other way round, as demonstrated by the Soviet-Czechoslovak Pact and the new "bilateralism" of the "Protocol."

Another factor to be taken into consideration is the effect which the Pact is likely to have on the economic "balance of power" after the war. In the case of the Soviet Union, the maintenance of her leading position in Europe will depend to a large extent on her ability to strengthen her economic potential. By securing a dominant influence in Czechoslovak economics, she has advanced considerably towards this end. British bankers, industrialists and merchants who think of East Central European countries in terms of limited turnovers in trade and services, will be well advised to abandon these views and consider the economic importance of this zone under the aspect of "the additional economic potential" which the command of its resources of men and material will give to the chief Power of this region. Czechoslovakia, for instance, has not only a very formidable industry, but her large production capacity for consumer's goods will also be an enormous asset during the years of reconstruction. Apart from that it should not be forgotten that of all the East Central European States—in all

probability of all Continental States—she will have immediately after the war the largest percentage of skilled labour. Czechoslovak and Soviet capacity to take Germany's place in Balkan industry and banking is a matter of smaller importance in this connection. The more interesting question is, in how far will Czechoslovak supplies and labour—and consequently the command of the economic and labour resources of the Middle Zone to which the economic provisions of the Soviet-Czechoslovak Pact provide the key—influence the Soviet position in world economy? It is reasonable to expect that the interchange of goods and services between the U.S.S.R. and Czechoslovakia will be free from difficulties arising from foreign exchange. Thus with the help of the neighbouring countries Russia may be able to effect part of her reconstruction without depleting her gold or foreign exchange reserves which will be available exclusively for transactions with the British Commonwealth and the U.S.A. Though Soviet competition in foreign markets is a matter for the distant future, it must not be overlooked that at a time when the unfavourable British balance of payment will hamper this country, every major change in the economic-financial position of another Great Power is of prime interest to Britain.

How far does the Soviet-Czechoslovak Treaty go towards a European solution? Before the Moscow Conference, Whitehall and the Kremlin did not see eye to eye in the matter. It was felt in London—and there is reason to believe that Washington agreed with this view—that as long as the foundations of a post-war European settlement had not been planned, it would be well to avoid prejudicing the general issue by individual and unco-ordinated political action. The idea, however, of getting the small European States to act as a unit in the team of the United Nations was not achieved, nor is it known whether any attempt was made to put it into effect.

A long-term assessment of the Soviet-Czechoslovak Pact must rest on the results of its further development. What happens to East Central Europe politically or

economically is of the greatest concern to Western Europe, indeed to the whole Continent. The Second World War and its history show that clearly. If, therefore, the Pact can lay the foundations for a new political structure for East-Central and South-Eastern Europe, and if an adequate place can be assigned to this combination in the Council of Europe, its value will be proved. This applies equally to the incorporation of the economic policy outlined in the Soviet-Czechoslovak Pact into a general international economic understanding. If, on the other hand, the agreement is merely another step in the struggle of the Great Powers for position in post-war Europe, it will be well to reserve judgment.

CHAPTER II

THE MEDITERRANEAN WAR

I : THE ITALIAN CAMPAIGN

When General Mark Clark's troops entered Naples on October 1 they found the city in a deplorable condition. Allied air raids had wrecked the dockyard and arsenal quarters and, indeed, the whole sea-front. Before departing the Germans, eager to cause their enemies and their ex-allies the maximum of trouble, had blown up power stations and gas works, wrecked water-mains and sewage works and fired, blown up or mined many of the principal buildings with the result that only one of the principal streets, the Via Romana, was entirely intact. A number of houses had been demolished as a punitive or a military measure in the course of the rioting that had followed the news of the armistice and of the speedy German occupation of Naples. A few German and die-hard Fascist snipers still infested the ruins and had to be expelled or "liquidated" by Allied patrols. The civil population lacked lighting, heat and pure water. For drinking water they had to depend on the insufficient quantities obtainable from usually polluted wells. They were extremely short of fuel and food. For several days they were in constant danger from the delayed-action mines which the retreating Germans had left behind in many parts of the city, regardless of the certainty that for any harm they might do to the Allied troops they would surely inflict far more upon innocent civilians. The worst, and apparently the last, example of this inhuman method of warfare was the explosion on October 7 of a powerful delayed-action mine in the basement of a post office in the Via Armando Diaz, which killed scores of civilians, including many children.

Apart from this misdeed the Germans committed an

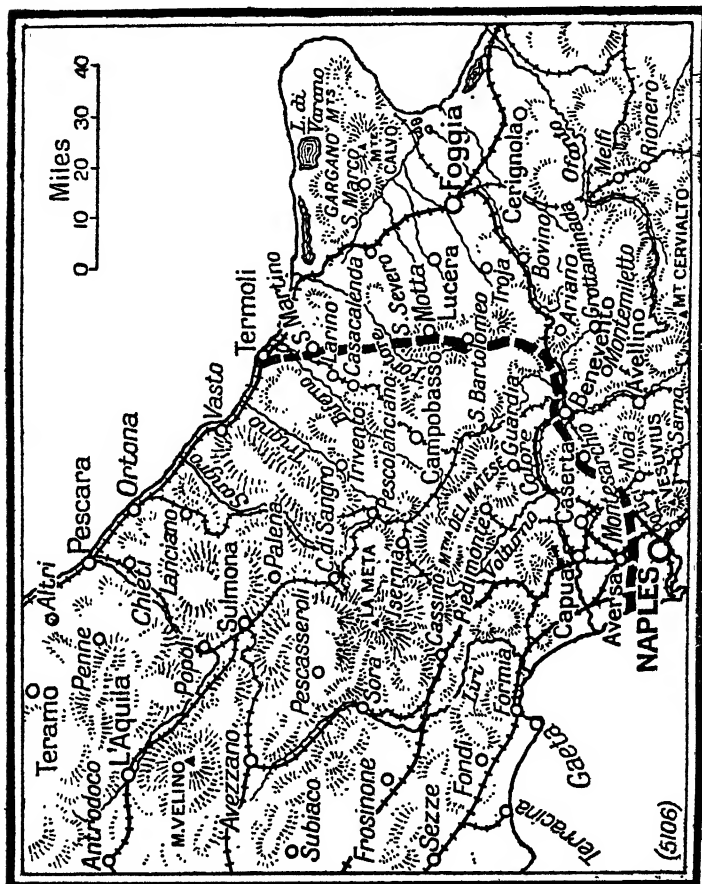
outrage of which the Vandals might have been proud. On September 12 they broke into the University of Naples and announced that they would burn it in retaliation for the participation of students in attacks on their troops. They then brought in petrol and set on fire the splendid library of the Royal Society of Naples, which was kept in the University. Italian guards who tried to intervene were shot. The fire brigades were driven away, and the troops, having flung hand-grenades into the blaze, remained until it had taken hold. They murdered many civilians and here, as in other parts of Italy, they frequently mutilated the bodies of their victims, especially women, in a disgusting manner. There was evidence that young soldiers, often mere boys, were most given to these atrocities.¹

On the day of the entry of the Fifth Army into Naples the Eighth Army took the townlets of Lucera and St. Severo. On the night of October 2-3 advanced troops of General Montgomery's Army landed at the coast town of Termoli, 17 miles ahead of the main body, and surprised the German garrison, some of whom were caught in their beds. The Germans reacted rapidly and attempted to recapture the town before the main body of the Eighth Army could come up, bringing a reinforcement of tanks from the west through the passes of the Apennines. Heavy fighting followed but the landing force held its own, and beat off several attacks while the tanks, which arrived on the Eighth Army front on October 7 and attacked next day, were repulsed, and 15 were destroyed out of between 30 and 40 which attacked. By then the main body had come into line with the Termoli force and the enemy fell back. But his retreat was orderly and reinforcements were coming up on both flanks of his Italian front.

The official reports of the movements of the 5th Army during the week that followed the entry into Naples, may be summarized as follows. On October 2 the Allied troops took Benevento and on October 4 they reached the airfields of Pomigliano and Capodichino. They found more than 100

¹ Those who believe that the domination of Youth will bring about a new era of virtue and progress may learn from this and similar unpleasant facts to inquire first how Youth has been brought up.

aircraft, most of them damaged, at the former airfield. At Capodichino there had been great destruction of stores, installations and equipment by our attacks and by the retreating Germans. On October 5 the right wing of the army succeeded in getting fighting patrols across the Calore River near its confluence with the Volturno and took Aversa. We captured



THE ITALIAN FRONT, OCTOBER 5, 1943

Capua next day, and on October 7 our advance-guards pushed the Germans out of Caserta. During the next four days we improved our positions along the left bank of the River Volturno which the army had reached at many points. But its crossing was clearly destined to be a difficult operation. The river was in full flood from unusually heavy autumn rains. The approaches at many points were quagmires. The Germans were strongly posted on higher ground commanding all likely crossings.

During these operations the Allied Air Forces had been actively attacking the enemy's communications behind his front as far north as Rome and Viterbo. Their Strategic Air Force went further afield. Bolzano (Botzen) in the Italian Tyrol was their most distant Italian target. It was raided, as was Pisa on the coast of Tuscany, on October 4. On the following day the railway yards and rolling stock at Bologna were attacked, and on October 6 Mestre, near Venice.

Meanwhile the brief campaign in Corsica had come to an end. On October 4 French and American troops entered Bastia and Borgo, the only important places held by the enemy after September 30. No great captures of material were reported and the Germans seemed to have been able to get away by sea fairly easily; singularly so, indeed, in view of the vast superiority of the Allies in aircraft and surface ships and their possession of the numerous Sardinian airfields. The proud German official claim to have lost but 250 killed and wounded in the 20 days' campaign in the island, and to have brought away all the guns and material of the force of between 25,000 and 30,000 men which constituted their part of its garrison and also that of Sardinia, was no doubt exaggerated: yet the escape of what was clearly a large majority of their force was disappointing.

Such vessels as were spared for the task of interception or were employed against German or German-controlled shipping in the northern waters of the Tyrrhenian Sea scored successes.

It was announced on October 5 that the Dutch submarine *Dolfijn* had sunk a large transport and two barges, and two days later it was made known that the Polish submarine *Dzik* had sunk two supply ships off Bastia. On October 8 the Admiralty announced that British submarines had sunk six hostile or enemy-controlled ships in the Mediterranean, an ammunition ship and a small supply ship in the Gulf of Genoa, an escorted medium-sized supply ship off the northern coast of Corsica, a naval auxiliary ship off Elba, a small supply ship off Toulon, and in Adriatic waters an auxiliary petrol-carrier intercepted north of Bari. More ships might have accomplished even more when the Germans were evacuating Corsica.

On the night of October 12 the Fifth Army attacked the Volturno line, and in spite of the local and temporary success of a spoiling attack delivered just before zero hour, it established several bridgeheads. These the Germans attacked while their dive-bombing aircraft made repeated attempts to destroy the bridges. But the attacks failed, the bridgeheads were steadily, if slowly, enlarged, and a

landing north of the mouth of the river covered by Allied warships improved the position.

Reports from A.F.H.Q. announced that after the repulse of a heavy attack by German ground troops on three bridgeheads and the loss of a number of aircraft in attempts to destroy the bridges on October 14, the Fifth Army had attacked. After sharp fighting it had captured most of the German positions near the north bank of the river by October 16 and was reinforced by further landings north of the river mouth. The Germans, fighting steadily and skilfully and aided by the bad weather, were forced back very slowly. They sowed the ground with mines and by blowing up roads, bridges, and culverts they delayed the advance materially. However, by October 25 the Fifth Army held a line from Cancellò to Sparanise and north-east from the last-named place across the upper waters of the Volturno to the Piedimonte d'Alife and Alife.

It is time to return to the Eighth Army. On October 12 it held a front about four miles north of Termoli. From this it made its way forward slowly and in the teeth of obstinate opposition, over country which was so muddy in the coastal plain that any vehicle accidentally running off the road was instantly and deeply bogged, while further inland the spurs of the Apennines and the villages and townlets that studded them gave the Germans abundant opportunities of fighting an obstinate delaying action. Nevertheless General Montgomery's troops made gradual progress all along the line. They took Campobasso and Vinchiatturo, an important road junction, on October 15 and next day they controlled all the roads leading thence to Termoli. On October 18 they took San Stefano in the mountains four miles beyond Campobasso and next day their right or Adriatic wing took Petacciato. Difficult country and bad weather delayed the advance of the left for some days but Lucito and other places near the heads of the Biferno stream, south-south-west of Termoli, were taken on October 22 and 23. Meanwhile some of the troops on the coast forded the swollen Trigno on the night of October 22 and established a bridgehead from which the Germans could not expel them. By October 25 the line ran from the bridgehead almost due south to a point a little west of the Vinchiatturo cross roads and thence, after turning south and then west again, to a point ten miles east of Alife where it met the wing of the Fifth Army. On that day both armies

gained further ground, the Eighth in particular appreciably widening its bridgehead north of the Trigno. Both made further progress against stiff resistance during the last week of the month, the Fifth Army taking Mondragone on the coast on October 29, while the Eighth Army had taken Monfalcone on the previous day.

During the period October 7-31, the Allied Air Forces, Strategic and Tactical, attacked whenever the weather permitted them. Great damage was done to railways and transport columns in the enemy's rear, and his aerodromes north and south of Rome were repeatedly raided. Isernia, an important road junction in the Apennines, and the ports of Gaeta on the western, and Ancona on the eastern coast of the Italian peninsula, were bombed and much damage was apparently inflicted there. Heavy bombers attacked the railways and harbour installations of Genoa in the first air attacks from Italian bases on the great port (October 29 and 30). Several small ports west of Genoa on the Italian Riviera were raided on October 30, and heavy bombers attacked the important Antheor viaduct, near Cannes, on the last day of the month.

Nor were the Allied navies idle. On the night of October 14 "British light coastal craft operating in the Piombino channel between Elba and the mainland of Italy," sank two hostile ships, while others were reported by the Admiralty to have been engaged in the Adriatic. On the same night British destroyers¹ operating there were reported by the Admiralty to have "intercepted two Italian vessels carrying German armed guards. One, laden with 500 tons of bauxite, was set on fire by the Germans and had to be sunk. . . . The other, a medium-sized tanker, was captured and taken into harbour." Two more Italian ships were intercepted in the Adriatic off Mijet Island on October 16 by British destroyers. One with a German armed guard on board was captured. The second, manned by Germans, was set on fire and sunk. On the night of October 21-22 a large German ship laden with ammunition and escorted by armed boats was caught by U.S. P.T. (patrol-torpedo) boats and destroyed to the south-east of Elba. German shore positions near Minturno, on the Gulf of Gaeta, were shelled by a U.S. cruiser and destroyers on the night of October 27-28. The loss of three U.S. warships in Italian waters was announced during the month. These were the minelayer *Skill* and the destroyers *Buck* and *Bristol*, both the last two by underwater explosion.

During November the Fifth Army was engaged in the difficult task of gradually pushing back the reinforced Germans from the strong positions which they held from Isernia to the sea, while the Eighth had to complete the crossing of the Trigno and then to fight its way to force the still stronger line of the River Sangro some 20 miles further north. The Germans were believed to be constructing a strong line of defence a few miles north of the second of these rivers. Their hill positions were naturally

¹ Among these were H.M. ships *Tyrian*, *Tumult*, *Quilliam* and *Quail*.

strong. The muddy coastal plain was never more than five miles wide and here, as on the western Italian front, the axis of our advance was "against the grain" of the country, since all its rivers and most of the spurs of the Apennines ran athwart the direction of the Allied advance.

To take the Fifth Army's operations first, it opened in November by capturing Teano and next day (November 2) A.F.H.Q. announced that most of the Montagna del Matese, the mountain mass north-east of the upper waters of the Volturno, was firmly held. On November 4 the Fifth Army cleared Monte Massico and occupied Sessa Aurunca near the coast. Next day its right centre, pressing forward from the Matese *massif*, crossed the upper Garigliano River and took Venafro. From this point, however, bad weather and obstinate German resistance, punctuated by frequent counter-attacks, greatly delayed the advance. The Army took Fornelli, west of Isernia, on November 8 and by November 12 it had reached Filignano, six miles north of Venafro, but at this point the German counter-attacks began north of Venafro, where the enemy regained some lost ground, and near Mignano to the south-west. From November 16 until the last days of the month raid, mud and floods practically put an end to fighting save for artillery duels and occasional encounters between patrols. The mountain roads were generally impassable for mechanical transport in this weather and pack transport, with which the Allies were not too badly supplied, came into its own. Not until November 30 was a slight advance recorded near Venafro.

On the Adriatic flank weather conditions were somewhat better and the Eighth Army made good progress against fierce opposition. On the night of November 2-3 it improved its position by crossing the upper stream of the Trigno, and on November 3 it repulsed an attack from San Salvo in which 20 Mark IV special tanks took part. On the following day the left wing of the Eighth Army scored a most important success by the capture of Castelpetroso and the important road junction of Isernia in the mountains, where it linked up with the Fifth Army.

On the same day an advance from the Trigno bridgehead carried San Salvo, and although the Germans retook the place by a bold counter-attack, they lost it again and definitely on November 5. By this time the Eighth Army had established two bridgeheads on the northern bank of the Trigno and from these they pressed steadily forward, taking Vasto, a fair-sized coast town, on the 5th, and on the 7th reaching Casalbordino, only five miles south of the lower reaches of the River Sangro where the Germans were expected to stand and fight. Further inland they gained ground, but slowly. Still they advanced and on November 9 they reached positions above the lower course of the Sangro and they took the important village of Castiglione from which they could control the lateral road leading eastward to Vasto. But by now the weather had become atrocious. Snow was falling in the Apennines ; the plain was a sea of mud ; the Germans sowed mines everywhere and, whenever they had time, blew up or burned such villages as they evacuated. It was not until November 20 that the capture of Archi gave the Eighth Army the command of the lower Sangro for some 12 miles inland from its mouth. The only German troops left south of this stretch of the river, a small unit of self-propelled artillery with an infantry battalion, had been expelled from their holding at Perano on the previous day, and had crossed the stream.

After two days of skirmishes and small advances the Eighth Army went forward again. On November 25 A.F.H.Q. published the following announcement :

"During the past few days, the Eighth Army, fighting in exceptionally bad conditions of mud and rain, crossed the River Sangro and secured a bridgehead on a front of some 9,000 yards to a depth of about 2,000 yards. This bridgehead has been firmly held against repeated German counter-attacks. . . ." On the same day General Montgomery told *Reuter's* correspondent : "We have got what we wanted. It has been a very tough business indeed, but British soldiers have risen to great heights in most appalling weather conditions. Our bridgehead is secure now."

Happily for the troops the weather now improved for a while. Positions were improved ; more supplies and reinforcements reached the bridgehead ; air support increased, and on November 27 more than 500 sorties

were flown on the lower Sangro. The enemy's attempts on the bridges had been, and continued to be, met by remarkably effective fire from our A.A. batteries. War correspondents were permitted to relate that the first crossing of the river had been made by two Home Counties regiments of the 78th Division and that these tried troops had borne the brunt of the German counter-attacks. The correspondent of *The Times* with the Eighth Army thus described their trials :

"For four days and five nights they suffered shelling, mortaring and machine-gunning, in wet clothes and sodden boots, without hot food or tea. The vagaries of the river behind them, and the constant blocking of the road leading to the crossings by mud-bound vehicles, threatened from time to time to cut them off for dangerously long periods." (*The Times*, November 29.)

There was but a brief delay before the Army broke forward out of its bridgehead. On November 29 A.F.H.Q. announced :

"British, Indian and New Zealand troops of the Eighth Army launched an attack from the River Sangro bridgehead against the enemy's strong position on the high ground to the north-west. In spite of repeated counter-attacks in which the enemy used flame-throwers, our troops are making good progress. . . ." On the following night A.F.H.Q. issued the following special announcement : "The whole of the high ridge which overlooks the Sangro Valley is now in our hands. The two bridgeheads on the Adriatic side of the coast have now been joined up to form one large penetration into the enemy's defensive positions. Our troops have broken deep into the main enemy winter line, and enemy counter-attacks during the afternoon have all been beaten off."

By December 3 the Eighth Army had driven the enemy from all his positions on the Lanciano ridge beyond the Sangro, had stormed Castel de Frentano, and was entering Casoli and Orsogna. A German counter-attack recovered Orsogna, but we took San Vito on December 4 and on December 6 the right wing of the Army had reached the Moro River, a small stream, but sufficiently flooded to constitute something of an obstacle. The enemy had lost over 1,000 prisoners and much equipment in the battle on and beyond the Sangro where his troops, although his 65th Division contained a fair proportion of impressed Poles and Lorrainers, had fought stubbornly enough. Without any belittlement of the admirable work of the British, Indian and New Zealand infantry and of the Air

Force, who had co-operated superbly with the attack, the chief credit for the victory seemed to have been deserved by the Artillery and Engineers, whose preparation of the attack had been magnificently thorough.

Before recording the renewal of the advance of the Fifth Army in December, it is proper to chronicle the principal operations of the Allied Air Force over Italy and of the Allied navies in the neighbouring seas during November. First must be related the story of a curious attempt to embroil the Allies with the Vatican and, indeed, with Catholic opinion generally.

On November 6 the German- and Fascist-controlled Rome radio gave out that Allied aircraft had dropped four large bombs on the Vatican City near St. Peter's, doing much damage. The Vatican station confined itself to the statement that four bombs had been dropped at 8.30 p.m. on November 5, and the *Osservatore Romano* said that a bomb had fallen on the railway station, injuring no one. The Berlin oversea radio station said that the bombs were of British origin, and on November 8 the German News Agency said that examination of splinters by the director of technical services in the Vatican and by artillery experts in Rome had shown that the splinters came from small-calibre British bombs. The German Ambassador to the Vatican was understood to have informed the Papal Secretary of State that "no German aircraft would have taken part in the bombing in any way." On November 9 General Eisenhower issued a report to the effect that on the day of the attack Boston aircraft had dropped bombs 17 miles north of Rome, and Mosquitoes had attacked objectives 40 miles away. In Washington Mr. Stettinius officially stated that no Allied aircraft had been near the Vatican City at the time when the bombs were dropped. It was clear that the Germans or the "neo-Fascists" of Mussolini's new party had dropped some captured British bombs for purposes of propaganda.

To enumerate all the targets of the Allied air offensive would be infinitely tedious to the reader. It need only be said here that the nearer communications and airfields of the army of Marshal Kesselring, who was now in command of all the German troops in Italy, were sedulously attacked by the Tactical Air Force.

The strategic targets attacked included the ball-bearing works at Turin, raided by Flying Fortresses on November 8, without loss to the attack; Genoa and another ball-bearing factory at Villa Perosa on the following day; the railway at Antheor, near Cannes, on November 11, and the chemical works near Popoli on the same day; the aerodromes at Salon and Istres le Tube, near Marseilles, where 30 fighters which came up lost 12 of their number to the Flying Fortresses and Marauders on November 16; submarine pens, docks and repair shops at Toulon on November 24; the viaduct at Recco, near Rapallo, on November 26 and the railway yards at Rimini on the Adriatic on November 27. Turin was again raided.

on November 25. On November 28 the Dogna tunnel, north of Trieste, was attacked and on the last day of November, Fiume. Early in November the *Luftwaffe* showed more of an offensive spirit than it had done recently over Italy, but after the loss of 14 aircraft to the Allied four during the second week-end of the month, the enemy generally reverted to the defensive.

At sea there were several small encounters. On November 2 British destroyers shelled Durazzo. Positions ahead of the Fifth Army front in the Gulf of Gaeta were shelled on November 13 by the British destroyers *Tyrian*, *Tumult* and *Grenville* and the Polish *Piorun*, and on November 19 an enemy convoy of small craft was attacked, a lighter sunk and a tug damaged. Shore batteries intervened but our destroyers only suffered superficial damage and lost but one killed. Further destroyer attacks on the enemy's coastal positions in the Gulf of Gaeta and on Civitanuova, near Ancona, were recorded later in the month and Allied light craft harried hostile shipping. There was reason to believe that the Italian cruiser *Ottaviano Augusto*, which the Germans had seized and held at Ancona, was damaged in one of the Allied air raids.

The exploits of seven British submarines, the commanders of which were named, were recorded in an Admiralty report issued on November 10. In recent patrols they had sunk seven ships, probably sunk three and damaged six others. Most of these, including an R-boat, two supply ships and a vessel carrying troops, were sunk or probably destroyed in the Aegean. A supply ship was torpedoed and sunk, as was a large lighter, off Rapallo. The commanders of these submarines were Lieutenants G. E. Hunt, M. L. Crawford, R. J. Clutterbuck, J. P. Fyfe, J. Whitton, A. D. Piper and W. H. Kett.

The Germans, who had claimed to have sunk four transports and two destroyers off the North African coast early in November, a claim which seems to have been greatly exaggerated by the airmen who returned from the raid, made similar claims for a raid on a convoy off Algeria on November 26. Actually they attacked with 30 Heinkel bombers which were intercepted by French Spitfires. The French airmen, intervening suddenly and spiritedly, had already disorganized the attack when U.S. Airacobras and British- and American-flown Beaufighters took over the defence of the convoy. Nine Heinkels were destroyed, four by the French. Damage to the ships was negligible.

Two losses, H.M. destroyer *Eclipse* and the submarine *Usurper*, which were recorded by the Admiralty on November 11 and 17 respectively. It was inferred by reason of the previous services of these ships that they had met their fate in Mediterranean waters. The *Eclipse* was commanded by Commander E. Mack, who survived, the *Usurper* by Lieutenant D. R. Mott. On November 26 the Admiralty stated that H.M. submarine *Trooper* (Lieut. J. S. Wraith) had not returned from patrol and must be

presumed lost. Another loss was the U.S. destroyer *Beatty* of 1,700 tons, sunk by German air attack. The French battleship *Richelieu*, which had been repaired after the injuries she had sustained at Dakar (*q.v. The Fourth Quarter*, pp. 14, 15), reached the Mediterranean from the United States and joined the Allied navies during November.

After meeting and defeating heavy counter-attacks west of Venafro and north-west of Mignano on November 30 and December 1, the Fifth Army passed to the offensive. On December 3, after an extremely heavy artillery preparation, it attacked on each side of the Capua-Rome road with the German positions on Monte Camino and Monte Maggiore as its chief objectives. These mountains had been strongly fortified up to their very summits by the Germans and they formed one of the main bastions in the enemy's defensive line. The attack of the British on Monte Camino and the Americans on Monte Maggiore made ground but slowly. The Germans had turned every ridge into a stronghold; they had hewn or blasted emplacements for their guns into the rocks; they made the utmost use of mines, and they were always ready to counter-attack. After carrying "Monastery Ridge," the highest point of Monte Camino, the British were expelled by a fierce counter-thrust, but on December 7 they regained the ridge after a hard struggle. The Americans with equal difficulty mastered Monte Maggiore; and it was not until December 10 that both mountains had been entirely cleared.

But more heavy fighting awaited General Clark's troops. They had received further reinforcements, French, Algerian and Moroccan troops, now excellently equipped and trained, and an Italian contingent who went into action just north of Mignano apparently on December 9-10 and captured some ground but were beaten back by the Hermann Göring Division. Then came further hard fighting west of Filignano and about the village of San Pietro, a village on a steep hill some five miles north-west of Mignano, which was only taken by American infantry on December 18 after three days and nights of fierce fighting, although it had been heavily bombarded for a week.

Monte Sambucaro, north of San Pietro, remained in

German hands, and the *Luftwaffe* during this period showed aggressive activity both on this and on the Eighth Army front. On December 20, indeed, the *communiqué* from A.F.H.Q. reported the destruction of 43 enemy aircraft on the Italian fronts and the Dalmatian coast against 16 Allied machines.

The next advances of importance recorded by the Fifth Army were the capture of Monte Cavallo, north-west of Venafrò, on December 22 and the storming of two heights on Monte Sambucaro on December 26. On December 29 A.F.H.Q. announced the capture of peaks in the northern sector of the Fifth Army front by French Moroccan troops. These heights are situated in the lofty Mainarde chain and on Monte Marrone, and their capture brought the Allies nearer to the control of the important mountain road from Colli to Atina. A vigorous German attack on British troops at Puntafiume, on the coast at the mouth of the Garigliano, was repelled with loss on December 28. On New Year's Eve American troops made further ground on Monte Sambucaro.

Meanwhile the Eighth Army had been engaged in hard and sanguinary fighting. After its right wing had established a bridgehead across the Moro River near the coast and had got some tanks across the water the weather broke again. Our armour, however, was able to move ahead towards San Leonardo, enemy counter-attacks were repulsed and on December 9 A.F.H.Q. reported that Canadian troops, strongly supported by armour, had "established firm positions north of the River Moro." These were held as was the original bridgehead against repeated counter-attacks by infantry and tanks, but the advance by the Canadians, who had taken over from the 78th Division on the Ortona-Guardingrele front, was difficult and slow, and the 8th Indian and 2nd New Zealand Divisions also encountered fierce opposition. The Germans had three divisions between Ortona and Guardingrele, and two, the 90th Panzer Grenadiers and the 26th Panzer Division, were of excellent quality. Very slowly our troops forced their way forward. They crossed the Ortona-Orsogna road at some

points on December 12, captured Caldari and Bererdi, villages south of Ortona, on December 14 and 15, and on December 16 New Zealand troops reached the outskirts of Orsogna after a sharp engagement in which 13 German tanks were destroyed and two captured.

Ortona was now outflanked and the 90th Panzer Grenadier Division, a new edition of the famous 90th Light Division of the Afrika Korps, had lost nearly half its infantry strength, while the 1st Parachute Division, which had been sent to support it, had also suffered heavily. On December 20 the Canadians had reached the outskirts of Ortona and tanks broke into the town next day and engaged German Mark IV tanks in its streets. The Germans, nevertheless, fought on from house to house with the utmost determination. It was not until December 28 that they left the ruined town, having sown booby traps and set time-bombs in many places. Fighting continued to the south-west and immediately north of the town into the New Year.

Although the Germans had inflicted considerable loss on the Allied troops,¹ they had probably suffered equally, and they had been compelled to send new divisions from Northern Italy to meet the increasing pressure of the attack. On December 5 nine German divisions were believed to be in line. Opposite the Eighth Army were the 1st Parachute, 26th Panzer, 90th Panzer Grenadier and 65th Infantry Divisions. Facing the Fifth Army were the 15th and 29th Panzer Grenadier Divisions, and the 44th, 94th and 305th Infantry Divisions. The 3rd Panzer Grenadier and Hermann Göring Divisions were in reserve after being heavily engaged and some evidence pointed to the appearance of a new 334th Division, the original of which had been captured in Tunisia, in the centre.

Bad weather often restricted Allied air activity during December, but attacks were made whenever possible on the enemy's ports, concentrations, communications and airfields. On December 15 long-range bombers attacked the railway between Bolzano and the Brenner Pass. On December 16 the Dogna bridge, north of Udine, was bombed and on December 18 the Antheor viaduct, near Cannes, had another visitation. Later in the month targets at Bolzano, Pisa, Padua, Vicenza and Ferrara were attacked in Northern Italy, as were the Recco viaduct and the railway bridges at Ventimiglia, near the French border.

A large landing-craft laden with motor-transport was sunk by a British submarine while in tow in the Gulf of Genoa. Otherwise most of the

¹ On December 15 Mr. Eden gave the British casualties up to November 23 as 3,212 killed, 9,709 wounded and 3,153 missing. The American losses in Italy up to November 25 were 1,603 killed, 6,361 wounded and 2,685 missing. Mr. King gave the Canadian losses in the Mediterranean area, including Sicily, up to November 23 as 713 killed, 2,725 wounded and 195 missing.

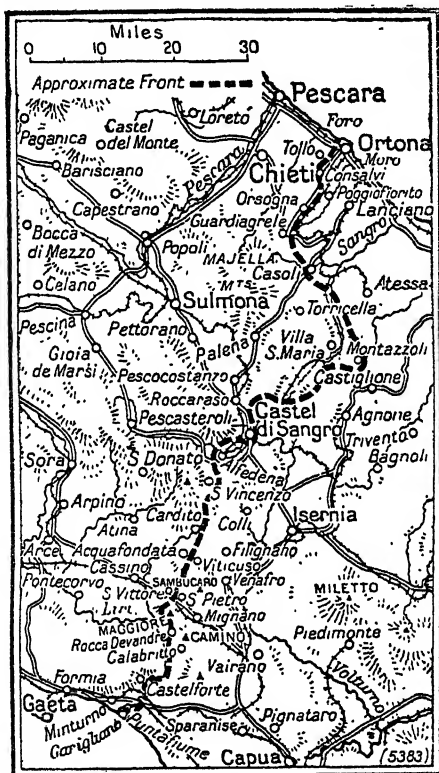
exploits² of our submarines, reported by the Admiralty on December 6, had been performed in the Levant. On December 18 U.S. patrol boats engaged German destroyers (probably French or Italian vessels which had fallen into German hands) near Elba, and may have torpedoed one, and on the same night British light coastal forces sank an escort vessel, a *Säbel* ferry and two motor vessels in the Adriatic. British warships co-operated on occasion with the Fifth and Eighth Armies by shelling positions on the enemy's exposed flank. The destroyers *Tyrian* and *Teazer* shelled Drvenik on the Dalmatian coast between Shplit and Shibenik, and British motor torpedo-boats, on the same occasion (December 21), found the ex-Yugoslav cruiser *Dalmatia*, which had been captured by the Germans, aground off Silba Island between Zara and Fiume, and claimed to have made an end of her.

Among events which particularly interested Americans in this campaign were the formation of an all-American Mediterranean Air Force under the command of Lieut.-General Carl Spaatz. This force it was announced would "concentrate on long-range bombing of strategic targets in Germany and in occupied and satellite countries." The General's command would include the 12th and 15th U.S. Army Air Forces. No explanation was given of the effect of this appointment on the other Mediterranean air commands.

On his return from Teheran and Cairo, President Roosevelt flew from Africa to Castelvetro airfield in Sicily, in the company of General Eisenhower and other high officers, and inspected a cross-section of the troops who had conquered the island. He bestowed the Distinguished Service Cross on five American officers. One of them was General Mark Clark, who by "his magnificent display of leadership, courage and determination" during a critical phase of the battle of Salerno, had inspired his troops to hold their ground at all costs. Meanwhile General Patton (whose "permanent" or substantive rank was colonel), the Commander of the U.S. Seventh Army, and an admirable leader, was in trouble with the Senate. It appeared that while visiting a hospital in Sicily he had mistaken a case of shell-shock for malingering and had struck the supposed coward. General Eisenhower, in American phraseology, "castigated" General Patton but did not inflict any technical punishment on him, and General Patton took the courageous course of apologizing

² The submarine commanders mentioned in the Admiralty's report were : Lieutenants N. L. Jewell, M. F. Ainslie, E. J. Turner, J. R. Drummond, R. Gatehouse, M. L. Crawford, R. J. Clutterbuck and C. Gordon.

to the soldier and to each division of his Army. There the matter might well have rested. It was clear that the General, entirely fearless himself, and perhaps not imaginative to the point of realizing that shell-shock



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might be genuine, had atoned for his error. It was left to the Senate to demand an official report from Mr. Stimson and to call in question the President's nomination of General Patton to hold permanent rank as major-general.

NOTE.—The reader will find references to the oppression of Italians by their German ex-ally and an outline of political developments in Allied-occupied and German-occupied Italy respectively, in Chapter VIII, Section 2.

2 : THE BALKAN FRONTS

The events of the last three months of the year in Greece and Yugoslavia, more especially in the latter country, were followed with difficulty and seen through a distorting mirage of propaganda. In Greece the feud between the organizations known as the E.L.A.S.¹ and the E.D.E.S.² which had flared out into fighting before the end of the previous quarter, complicated the situation and gave the Germans something of a respite. The E.L.A.S. was, so to speak, the military wing of a powerful underground organization called the National Liberation Front (E.A.M.) which the Allies had found in being when they began to assist in organizing Greek resistance in the summer of 1942. The E.A.M. was, generally speaking, strongly Left-wing in its politics and it was under much Communist influence. On the other hand Colonel Sarafis, who commanded the E.L.A.S. forces, was not a Communist. On the results of Allied assistance, the well-informed Correspondent of *The Times* at Ankara wrote (*loc. cit.* November 2) :

With Allied support this organization formed bands of partisans, to which there soon flocked large numbers of patriotic Greeks, eager to fight against the invaders . . . ; these adherents, who belonged to all political parties, had to take an oath of absolute loyalty to the orders of E.A.M. under the death penalty. Soon the number of patriots under E.A.M. reached about 30,000. . . . In the meantime other patriotic organizations had sprung up and had also obtained Allied support ; the principal of them is the E.D.E.S. . . . under the leadership of Colonel Zervas. For some time these various organizations worked smoothly and even co-operated, with the result that the Germans and Italians were practically driven out of the countryside which was, and still is, under the almost complete control of patriots. This continued until the recent outbreak of hostilities between E.L.A.S. and E.D.E.S., the immediate cause of which is believed to be the sharing of war material obtained from the Italian forces after the Italian capitulation.

The reasons of dissension are, however, much deeper, and the Germans have been quick to . . . exploit them. E.D.E.S. is accusing E.L.A.S. of trying to monopolize the movement of resistance, with the ultimate motive of establishing Communism in Greece ; E.A.M.—which . . . is the political committee directing E.L.A.S.—is further accused of using terrorist methods against the adherents of other organizations and of putting to death its own adherents who, realizing that they are working for the establishment of Communism in Greece, tried to break away and join

¹ National Popular Liberation Army.

² National Democratic Greek Army.

other patriotic organizations. E.A.M. denies these accusations and maintains that although many of its leaders are Communists, they have, especially since the suppression of the Comintern, given up the idea of establishing Communism in Greece and are now co-operating with other Left-wing parties to found a régime of social reform in Greece. E.A.M., in its turn, accuses E.D.E.S. of being a Fascist organization encouraged by the Germans and working for the continuation of the ruling classes . . . of supporting wealthy Greeks who selfishly invest their money abroad . . . and of co-operating with those wealthy people who produce food in the black market . . . while the poorer classes are starving.

"Most of these charges," wrote the Correspondent of *The Times*, "are certainly unfair or exaggerated; they are the result of the deplorable state of mind which labels as 'Fascist' anybody opposed to social upheavals, and as 'Communist' any person favouring social reform." This was true enough, and the situation was further embroiled by the existence of a great number of other patriotic bodies—a prominent Greek, who escaped to Cairo in the autumn, said that 96 existed—by the readiness of ambitious young men to pose, according to their political tastes, as "saviours of society" or as little Lenins; nor was it bettered by the irresponsible silliness of juvenile-minded Left-wingers in this country who rushed into copious print in defence of E.L.A.S. against the "Royalists," "Fascists" and "reactionaries" who were said to be following Colonel Zervas. That he happened to be a Republican was awkward for them, but they doubtless banked on public ignorance of this interesting fact. The one political issue that emerged at all clearly from this unhappy confusion was whether the King of Greece should, or should not, return to Greece before a National Convention had decided, after liberation of the country, what its future constitution should be. On this Greek opinion, so far as could be judged from the highly contradictory reports that came from occupied Greece, was as divided as were the partisans.

The quarrels between the factions led to an open scandal. While Colonel Zervas was engaged with German columns in north-western Greece his troops were attacked by the E.L.A.S., and a New Zealand officer, attached apparently to his organization by the British Middle East Command, was killed. Appeals were now made from

many quarters for an immediate cessation of this shocking war within a war. On October 22 the Commander-in-Chief Middle East, General Wilson, sent a message both to the Greek Army and to the Greeks of Greece, especially the partisans.

He warned them that the Germans were still unbeaten and that a hard task lay before all the Allies. The collapse of Italy had faced the German command with a difficult problem, especially in Greece where the German armies could only remain by fostering internal quarrels among the Greeks. "There are those among you who, banded together and sworn to fight the invader, have turned their arms against each other. This is not the time, and arms are not the means, for trying to resolve your internal difficulties. I am fully informed of these difficulties and of the misguided steps which some of you are allowing yourselves to take. I know, nevertheless, that most of the people of Greece are united against the enemy. For the sake of this majority and in the cause of unity, I can say to you that this useless and fratricidal strife must cease. . . ."

The appeal was temporarily effective, but before long the quarrel had been revived, thanks mainly to the ingenuity of the Germans, whose use of forged documents, faked messages and signals and all the other apparatus of the *agent provocateur* was as masterly as it was unscrupulous. Like all political extremists the leaders of the E.A.M. had a noble disregard for the judicial examination of evidence and they were soon accusing the E.D.E.S. of treachery. Their rivals brought similar charges and so, though the E.D.E.S. bands won some successes at Vulgarelli, in north-western Greece, and in the Pindus mountains, and although the E.L.A.S. blew up a troop train near Patras and destroyed a convoy near Ayios Phloros, also in the Peloponnese, the situation deteriorated again in December, and by the end of the year E.L.A.S. and E.D.E.S. were fighting again. Meanwhile King George had written a letter to the Prime Minister, M. Tsouderos¹, in which, after emphasizing the vital necessity for Greek unity both now and when the day of liberation arrived, he continued :

"In my desire to contribute to a timely clarification of the political atmosphere and to the preservation of national unity and concord, I wish you to know that when the long-desired hour of the liberation of our motherland strikes I shall examine anew the question of my return to

¹ On November 8. It was published in Cairo on December 12.

Greece in agreement with the Government, in the light of the political and military conditions of the time, and with the national interest, which is the guide of all my thoughts as my counsel."

It was hoped that this letter would do something to pacify Greek quarrels. Nothing else, however, cheered Philhellenes until New Year's Eve when the Greek Prime Minister broadcast an appeal for national unity. He had already called upon the members and chiefs of the various partisan organizations either to reconcile their differences and combine against the common enemy or else return to their peaceful avocations. In his broadcast of December 31 he quoted a message from Mr. Eden, who welcomed the initiative taken by the Greek Government in calling for a general reconciliation among the partisan bands, and another from Mr. Cordell Hull, who said that reports of the fratricidal strife within Greece had shocked the American Government and people and that he hoped that they would cease to expend their strength in intestine quarrels. He next pointed out that

"one receives power by virtue of the people's will. You who are fighting for the people's rights could indeed never plot to abolish or usurp those rights. Such a policy would mean that you are seeking a dictatorship, and God help the man who could plan a dictatorship after the war on any pretext whatever. The ideals of Hellenes are freedom in all its manifestations, and just as they never accept a foreign yoke, so do they also hate their own tyrants. Unite then, as one man. Form a single army. The Commander-in-Chief of the Allied forces will also be your Commander-in-Chief. Your efforts will be co-ordinated by him through suitable channels, and your united army will be an army of freedom embodied in the Allied army. . . ."

The King also broadcast to his people, calling on them to unite. He likewise signed a decree-law depriving all who had placed themselves at the service of the enemy of Greek citizenship and of all public functions and of their military rank.

While the affairs of Greece were confused the internal politics of Yugoslavia took a remarkable and in some respects embarrassing turn. The Yugoslav Government gained no more influence by their migration to Cairo. Their War Minister and nominal Commander-in-Chief of the forces operating against the Germans, General Mihailovitch, having utterly failed to arrive at any

understanding with General Tito who commanded the more numerous partisans in Croatia, Bosnia, Dalmatia and Slovenia, betook himself to the wild country where Bosnia, Montenegro and Serbia meet, and awaited



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further developments without showing any conspicuous military activity. The Government in Cairo, who had never been able to exercise any real control over him,¹ still continued to support him and to appeal to the partisan forces under General Tito to obey his orders,

¹ The writer assumes that they attempted to control him.

which they had no intention of doing. This resulted in exchanges broadcast on behalf of the Government from Cairo, and on behalf of the People's Army of Liberation (henceforth described as P.A.L.) from Tiflis, in Soviet Russia,¹ of appeals, accusations, recriminations, declarations and claims which must have delighted the cynical Germans. Both sides, especially the Government, claimed every success, small or great, over Germans or Bulgarians as the work of their particular protégés. Each charged the other with treachery, conspiracy, terrorism and schism. The P.A.L. called its Yugoslav opponents indifferently *Ustashi*, the term used by the Pavelitch faction for its irregular bands, and *Chetniks*, which was the term previously employed to describe the largely Serb irregulars who had either joined Mihailovitch or were fighting for their own hand. The Mihailovitch faction called its opponents "Communists" or "Terrorists," with an equal indifference to the facts.

It is impossible to give more than a brief summary of the stages of this wordy warfare in the restricted compass of this section. It is not an edifying record.

On October 7 King Peter broadcast an appeal to the nation to have patience and obey General Mihailovitch and other leaders of resistance, and a promise that when the country was freed all Yugoslavs would have an opportunity of expressing their views as to how real and lasting unity could be attained and preserved. On October 20 General Mihailovitch issued, through the Government in Cairo, a denial of aspersions on the honour and unity of the Army, which reflected the desire of the nation's enemies to prevent the creation of a truly democratic Yugoslavia and to disturb the harmony of her peoples. On October 26 the Government published a message from him complaining that P.A.L. partisans had attacked his forces. Two days later the Government, in a statement from Cairo, complained that the partisans had been constantly accusing General Mihailovitch of treasonable co-operation with the enemy and of attacking their troops, and that the B.B.C. had refrained from giving any news of the activities of General Mihailovitch's troops for some time past and had attacked him recently.²

On November 9 it was stated that General Wilson had broadcast a message to the Yugoslav patriots congratulating them on their military action in Dalmatia, and pledging them all possible support, "after due consideration of the total requirements of Allied strategy." But he added that he had learnt that in some areas of Western Yugoslavia "certain

¹ Often affirmed, never denied.

² For some time past General Mihailovitch had done so little that the B.B.C. could scarcely be blamed for failing to chronicle his inactivity.

persons were dishonouring the name of *Chetnik* and are helping the Germans. . . ." In fact this did not necessarily apply to the Mihailovitch irregulars since the word *Chetnik* in Serbo-Croat means simply a member of a *cheta* or irregular band, and the Cairo Correspondent of *The Times* properly pointed out that many bands were operating in Yugoslavia who had no connexion with Tito's or Mihailovitch's organizations.

On December 1, the 25th anniversary of the founding of the Yugoslav Kingdom, King Peter broadcast to all Yugoslavs calling on them to hold out to the end, to forget their rivalries and concentrate against the enemy. A royal decree was also published that no further action would be taken against members of the Yugoslav forces who, disliking the actions and composition of the Yugoslav Government in London, had resigned their commissions and asked permission to join the British Army. But the appeal and concession came too late.

On December 4 the Free Yugoslav radio announced that General Tito had been promoted Marshal (by whom?) and appointed Minister of Defence. A meeting of delegates held at Jajce (pronounced Yaytse) in Bosnia had decided to form a National Committee of Liberation with the powers of a provisional government, and had agreed in principle to adopt a federal constitution. Dr. Ribar, a Croat, who had been a member of the Constituent Assembly in Belgrade in 1919-20, was elected President of the Committee, while General Josip Broz (*alias* Tito) became head of a Committee of National Defence. It was said that there were four Vice-Presidents of the Liberation Committee, a Serb, a Croat, a Slovene and a Macedonian. The names of four Ministers were made public and it was announced (from Tiflis?) that the Anti-Fascist Council of the National Liberation Movement had drawn up a federal constitution on November 30 which would come into force immediately.

All this was highly embarrassing to the Governments who had recognized King Peter's Government as the legitimate Government of Yugoslavia, but had the best of reasons to give most help to those Yugoslavs who were rendering most service to the Allied cause. On December 8 Mr. Law, Minister of State, replied for Mr. Eden to a parliamentary question concerning the relationship between the two Yugoslav Governments. He said :

"I have at present no further information than what has appeared in the Press to the effect that a Supreme Legislative Committee and an Executive National Committee of Liberation, with the status of a temporary Government, have been set up . . . under the auspices of General

Tito, the leader of the partisan forces." Nor could he say what would be the relations between this body and the Yugoslav Government in Cairo. In answer to supplementary questions, Mr. Law said that our policy was to support all forces in Yugoslavia which were resisting the Germans. We were giving more support to the partisans than to General Mihailovitch, for the reason that the resistance of the partisan forces was very much greater.

On December 13 the Yugoslav Government issued a statement, apparently in reply to Mr. Law's announcement of support to the "Army of Liberation," in which they asked whether the nation deserved this treatment, and went on to complain that they had not been allowed to get into contact with their people by wireless "in order to repulse harmful enemy propaganda, among which partisan propaganda is taking one of the most prominent places."

This was not helpful. However, the Allied Governments made further efforts to reconcile the two parties. The U.S.S.R., following the British precedent, announced their intention of sending a military mission to Yugoslavia to discover what was happening, and the Commissariat for Foreign Affairs, in making the statement, added that according to their information General Mihailovitch's *Chetniks* were "causing harm to the struggle for liberation."

A week later the embarrassments of the Allies increased. The Free Yugoslav radio broadcast a proclamation which it repeated on several occasions until December 23, breaking altogether with the Government in Cairo. After accusing it of hostility to the northern forces of liberation and criticising King Peter for showing confidence in such a Government and in General Mihailovitch, it declared :

"The so-called Yugoslav Government abroad is deprived of all the rights of a legal Government. . . . King Peter II is forbidden to return to the country until the whole country is liberated. . . . International obligations or treaties which may in future be contracted by the fugitive Yugoslav Government in the name of Yugoslavia will not be recognized." The proclamation ended with the somewhat surprising statement that it had been drawn up by the National Council at Jajce (pronounced *Taytse*) on November 29, which provoked the question why it had not been published at the time.

From this disturbing picture it is well to turn to the more agreeable spectacle presented by the resistance of General Tito's partisans. These were composed of lightly equipped regular units, full-time fighting men, among whom were a number of former soldiers of the Yugoslav Army and irregular part-time bodies. Many women served in the ranks and fought beside the men. At first, readers of the bulletin issued by the Free Yugoslav wireless station were inclined to smile at the high serial

numbers of the divisions and brigades of the Army of Liberation, and at reports of "battles" between, say, a partisan division and a German division, which cost the enemy a couple of dozen dead. But after a while it became clear that the partisans were fighting admirably, that they were ably led, and that they were occupying the energies of increasingly large forces of Germans and Bulgars. Here is a summary of the chief events on this front during the quarter.

On October 11 it was announced that partisan forces had effected a successful raid on Tuzla in Bosnia. On October 10 they claimed the capture of Cherso (Cred) Island, 20 miles south of Fiume. On October 14 the German wireless stated that Marshal Rommel had assumed supreme command of the operations against the partisans. During the next month the Germans were chiefly occupied in recapturing islands, in which they were fairly successful, and in clearing the main avenues of communication in Dalmatia and Croatia, where their success was limited. They brought with them two so-called divisions of Russian deserters mixed with Germans and various adventurers under one General Vlasov, whose men were accused of grisly cruelties. During the third week of November the Germans who had, they believed, cleared the valley of the Bosna River, found themselves virtually beleaguered there, and four German troop trains were wrecked, three on the Zagreb-Belgrade main line. Meanwhile Rommel had opened an offensive on the Dalmatian coast, and on November 19 the Germans reported the capture of Trogir and several small ports where the enemy feared an Allied landing. The Germans also announced the defeat of "Communist" bands in the Slovene country north-east of Fiume and claimed that over 8,000 of the enemy had been killed or captured. They also moved fresh troops into the Tuzla district where the Free Yugoslav radio reported that they had been held up. On November 21 the partisans reported the repulse of an attempt to take Travnik in Central Bosnia.

Meanwhile the patriotic elements in Albania, joined by a number of Italians, had taken up arms and had shown much activity in various parts of the country. Bands operated as far south as Berat, and on November 4 Mr. Churchill said in Parliament :

"Thousands of Albanian guerillas are now fighting in their mountains for the freedom and independence of their country. From the experience of other occupied countries they have learned that the so-called independence conferred by the Germans is a cruel fraud. . . . The Germans are employing all the usual methods by which they seek to subdue warlike peoples ; already they have bombed Albanian villages and killed Albanian women and children ; but the Albanian guerillas continue to harass the enemy and to attack his communications. The British liaison officers who are with these guerillas have paid high tribute to their fighting qualities." The Prime Minister added that the British Government's policy remained as explained by the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs on December 18,

1942, i.e. we wished to see Albania freed from the Axis yoke and restored to her independence. The frontiers will of course be considered at the peace settlement.

On November 16 the Germans reported that fighting had been going on for ten days near Tirana, the Albanian capital. Early in December the Yugoslav partisans made a series of attacks on the Zagreb-Belgrade railway and on the Brod-Serayevo line, derailing several trains. Fighting had by now spread into Macedonia, where the Bulgarian forces were attacked, but Debar (Dibra) on the Albanian border, which had been temporarily captured by the partisans, was lost on December 4. Vares, an industrial town north of Serayevo, was captured by the partisans on December 1.

By this time the Germans had realized the formidable nature of the opposition. They brought up reinforcements from Greece, Northern Italy and Austria, and they renewed their thrusts in Bosnia where they captured Jajce, and they also took Prijepolje¹, 40 miles west-north-west of Novibazar, after heavy fighting. As soon, however, as the impetus of their attack slowed down the partisans reattacked. Moslem partisans took Kladany, 25 miles north of Serayevo, and in Northern Bosnia the partisans broke into Banyaluka, and though they could not capture the enemy's headquarters there, they killed a number of the garrison and captured valuable supplies. Fighting was also reported near Podgoritza, in Montenegro, before the end of December by which time the Germans were believed to have ten divisions in the field in Yugoslavia. On December 20 delegates from General Tito's army arrived in Egypt to concert future action with the Allied Mediterranean Command.

During the quarter Allied air co-operation with the patriotic resistance in Greece, Albania and Yugoslavia was frequent and far-reaching. During October Tirana airfield was bombed on three occasions and several aircraft were believed to have been destroyed on the ground. Skoplye (Uskub) was twice raided and much damage was done to the marshalling yards on the Salonika-Belgrade railway by Mitchells, escorted by Lightning fighters. Another target was Nish, the junction in Southern Serbia of the Orient railway to Sofia and Istanbul, and the Salonika-Belgrade line, which was heavily attacked by the North-West African Air Force (N.W.A.A.F.) on October 20. In continental Greece the airfield at Argos was bombed on October 13 from

¹ The "j" in Serbo-Croat = our "y."

Africa, and bombers of the Strategic Air Force from Southern Italy claimed the destruction of hangars and many parked aircraft at Salonika on October 15. The next new target was Podgoritzza airfield, attacked on October 25 by the N.W.A.A.F., and medium bombers with fighter escort raided the airfields near Salonika on the following day. On November 6 the Berat-Kuchevo airfield was raided and some 40 motor vehicles destroyed by Warhawks, near Metkovitz, on the Dalmatian coast.

During the remainder of November many attacks were made on Balkan targets besides those directed, generally from the Middle East, against the enemy's shipping and aerodromes in Crete, Rhodes and other Aegean islands. R.A.A.F. Kitty-bombers attacked shipping and left a vessel sinking at Split (Spalato); South African Spitfires attacked the railway north of Dubrovnik, and medium bombers of the N.W.A.A.F. raided Ulcinj (Dulcigno) on November 7. Durazzo harbour was also attacked on November 9 with Spalato. Berat-Kuchevo airfield and oil refinery were targets on November 12, and fighters and fighter-bombers raided trains and transport columns in Yugoslavia.

On November 14 came the first attack on the important railway junction and railway workshops at Sofia. It was the first attack on the Bulgarian capital and it was made by daylight by Mitchells of the 12th U.S.A.A.F. with Lightning escort. Many hits were made and nine enemy fighters trying to intervene were shot down. The Eleusis and Kalamaki aerodromes near Athens were raided, the former by heavy, the latter by medium bombers of the N.W.A.A.F. on November 15, and next day bombers of the Tactical Air Force visited Eleusis and caused more damage. More raids on the Athenian airfields followed and on November 18 both Eleusis and Larissa aerodromes were bombed. That night R.A.F. heavies from the Middle East attacked the harbour at Khalkis in Central Greece. Albanian targets were raided next and then came a heavy raid on the Sofia railway yards by a strong force of Liberators. On the last night of November Durazzo harbour in Albania was the target.

December opened with numerous harassing attacks on transport and troops in Yugoslavia. Heavy bombers of the N.W.A.A.F. attacked the aerodromes in Attica on December 8. The third attack on Sofia was delivered on December 10 by a strong force of U.S. Liberators with Lightning escort. Bombing was accurate and destructive and two attempts at interception, one by 40 fighters over Sofia, and the other by another force

near the Albanian coast south of Scutari, by which route the attackers returned, were repulsed, and nine machines were shot down. The attacking bombers suffered no loss. During the last three weeks of December Kotor, Zara and other points were bombed and heavy attacks were made on the aerodromes near Athens, on the arsenal at Salamis and on the Podgoritzia aerodrome in Montenegro. The most important Balkan air operation during this period was probably the raid on Sofia on December 20 which appears to have done great damage and apparently determined the Bulgarian Government to order the evacuation of the capital by all persons not engaged in the war effort or in other essential occupations.

Something must be said here of the situation in Bulgaria since King Boris's death. The expectation that it would be followed by some loosening of the bonds by which Bulgaria was attached to Germany proved illusory. On the contrary his death deprived the Bulgarians of the only leader who could sometimes resist German demands. The new Prime Minister, Bojilov, had German sympathies, and the Cabinet of civil servants and other colourless personages which he had formed showed no signs of independence. The Germans tightened their grip on the country. They controlled its chief ports, its capital, its airfields and its railways, and a large part of the Bulgarian Army was now stationed in Greek and Yugoslav territory. There the Bulgarians showed themselves as greedy as the Germans and, if possible, more brutal.

Such were the principal events in the Western Balkans during the last three months of 1943. They doubtless caused the Allies some embarrassment. They caused the Germans infinitely more.

NOTE.—Such naval operations as were reported from the Adriatic have already been recorded in the first section of this chapter.

3 : THE AEGEAN ISLANDS

The dispatch of small British forces to various Greek islands which was chronicled in the preceding volume of this series (*The Sixteenth Quarter*, Chapter I, Section 4A) was a military gamble and an unlucky one. For British troops from Egypt, Cyprus or Syria to be transported to and maintained in these islands, two conditions were required. These were, firstly, the seizure of one or both

of the large islands, Rhodes and Crete, which lay on each flank of the sea-route from the Eastern Mediterranean into the Aegean waters, and secondly, the provision of sufficient fighter cover to protect the expeditions from air attack both before and after landing. Of the two large islands, Crete contained four aerodromes and Rhodes two. Crete was near enough to the airfields of



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Cyrenaica for better fighter cover to be provided for an invading force than could be furnished from Cyprus for troops disembarking on Rhodes. The Cretan population was friendly and armed bands still held the mountains. On the other hand, Crete was garrisoned by 30,000 Germans who had disarmed their Italian allies and held the ports and aerodromes. In Rhodes the Italians, who outnumbered the German contingent by more than four to one, 40,000 against 9,000, were expected to make common cause with the British and they had, indeed, been ordered by Marshal Badoglio to resist any German

interference. These considerations appear to have determined the British High Command in the Levant to leave Crete alone and to bank on Italian support in Rhodes.¹

As has been related in the previous volume (*The Sixteenth Quarter*, p. 53) the Italians in Rhodes proved broken reeds. A British advance party which reached the island found that nothing could be done and departed. Nevertheless, it was decided to pursue the operations within the enemy's "enclosed waters," although he dominated all the entrances from his airfields in Crete and Rhodes and held Carpathos (Scarpanto) Island, between Rhodes and Crete, into the bargain. The occupation of Cos, Leros and Samos has already been described (*The Sixteenth Quarter*, *loc. cit.*). It was defended by Mr. Attlee in the course of the debate on the Address on November 24 in the following terms.

"The House will remember that the Prime Minister explained that our landing at Salerno, at the extreme range of our fighter aircraft, was a hazardous operation. . . . It was a close-run thing, but it succeeded. . . . In war risks must be run and should be run if commensurate advantages were to be obtained, and our actions in the Aegean were undertaken with a two-fold object; first, to help the attack on Italy by causing the Germans to disperse their forces, and second, to take advantage of those fleeting opportunities which the collapse of Italy brought in its train. . . ." Mr. Attlee added that when there was no hope of effecting anything at Rhodes "attention was turned to Cos and Leros, although operations there were necessarily carried on well within the range of the enemy's powers and activities, but the former was important for its airfield and the latter as a naval base."

The persistent German air attacks on Cos, which began almost immediately after its occupation, wore down the South African squadron which was using the aerodrome. The British garrison was "short of anti-aircraft defences and of room for dispersal." It was composed of a battalion of the Durham Light Infantry with R.A.F. personnel and a detachment of the R.A.F. Regiment. The Italians were entirely unreliable. On October 3 the Germans launched their attack with sea-borne troops conveyed in

¹ From Derna, Cyrenaica, to Ganea on the northern coast of Crete is a distance of about 210 miles. From Nicosia, in mid-Cyprus, to Rhodes is about 285 miles. It should be added that one reason for abstaining from an attack on Crete may have been the lack of sufficient transport for the numbers required, owing to the demands of the Italian campaign and the Far Eastern war.



MARSHAL "TITO"

barges, coasters and a few larger ships, convoyed by E-boats and armed auxiliary vessels,¹ but well covered by aircraft which, as the enemy approached the beaches by night, dropped numerous parachute troops with mortars and machine-guns in the interior of Cos. The Germans landed at two points, covered by heavy attacks by diver-bombers and "strafing" fighter aircraft and quickly drove the small garrison from the airfield into the hills. A fair number of men of the battalion which had been landed in Cos and of the R.A.F. got away on small boats. Others held out for a while in the hills and eventually escaped by sea. R.A.F. Headquarters, Middle East, waited until October 26 to issue the singular announcement that "our remaining land patrols" on Cos, "having completed their task, have been successfully withdrawn." As an offset to the German claim to have captured 600 British and 2,500 Italians on the island, it was not a success.

After landing on Cos the Germans, who boasted that they had only lost 85 killed and wounded there, attacked the islands of Symi and Leros. The attack on Leros, according to Mr. Attlee, began on October 4. It appears to have opened with air attacks.

"On October 7," said the Lord President of the Council, "our naval forces found and destroyed six landing craft and two merchant vessels, with a heavy loss of personnel, and air attacks were subsequently made on the enemy landing craft and on enemy airfields. Those losses inflicted a toll on the enemy, and in the meantime reinforcements were put into Leros." The attack on Symi was made, according to a *communiqué* from R.A.F. headquarters, Middle East, on October 7 and was beaten off by the small garrison with heavy loss. Prisoners were taken.

Unfortunately, although our heavy bombers from the Middle East, with support from North-west Africa, continued their attacks on the enemy's air forces in Crete and Rhodes, and on the Greek mainland, while a naval striking force was maintained in the Aegean² or made

¹ The Germans may have had an Italian destroyer or two on which they had laid hands in these waters, but even this is uncertain.

² It is hard to see how British and Allied warships could have been "maintained" in the Aegean without any base but Leros, which was under constant air attack. Perhaps Mr. Attlee meant that our ships were able to pay frequent visits to these waters, entering them by night.

constant incursions into its waters, adverse weather conditions greatly curtailed the effectiveness of our air attacks. The Germans, who claimed to have "heavily damaged" two British cruisers while they returned from the convoy action of October 7, were sorely harassed at sea by our surface craft and submarines. On October 21 an official naval announcement was issued at Alexandria. It said :

"British naval forces, assisted by units of the Greek Navy, have been constantly operating in the Dodecanese Islands during the past fortnight. They have destroyed several enemy vessels and damaged others. Various enemy-occupied island bases and harbours have been bombarded with satisfactory results, fires and explosions being observed." On October 25 Commander W. J. Church, captain of the destroyer *Hursley*, described how his ship, with the Greek destroyer *Miaulis*, had engaged an enemy vessel armed with 4-inch guns¹ and left her burning and sinking, besides scoring hits on two E-boats. An official report issued by the Admiralty on November 10 recorded successes in different parts of the Mediterranean by seven British submarines. Among these were the sinking in the Aegean of a medium-sized vessel and an R-boat, both carrying troops, by torpedoes, the destruction of a small supply ship in similar fashion off Naxos, and the sinking by gunfire of a small supply ship wearing the German ensign north of Leros, and the destruction of a Siebel ferry. Other enemy ships were damaged, and a minelayer was believed to have been sunk.

In spite of these attacks and losses, the Germans built up an expeditionary force for the attack on Leros, and made up for their weakness on the water by increasing their air strength in Greece and the islands. Our garrison was composed of units of The Buffs, The Royal West Kent, The King's Own Regiments and The Royal Irish Fusiliers. They numbered about 4,000 men. With them were 6,000 Italians.

Mr. Attlee gave the following account of the loss of the island on the opening day (November 24) of the Debate on the Address. He said :

"The long-awaited assault came at 6.30 on the morning of November 12. . . . On November 13 the enemy succeeded in establishing beach-heads on the east coast, in the north and in the centre of the island. The island consists of two parts, connected by a narrow neck in the centre. In the afternoon parachute troops were dropped on Rachi Ridge, which is in the narrow connecting link. Throughout the day bombing was severe. Long-range fighters operating from 300 miles away, opposed by enemy short-range fighters, were unable effectively to interrupt it.

¹ Described by Commander Church as a "small vessel" without further detail. Perhaps an armed merchantman. The account of the action appeared in *The Times* on October 26.

"During the night of the 12th and 13th more parachute troops were dropped on Rachi Ridge and our garrison was cut into two parts. On Sunday, the 14th, an attack against troops in the central sector of the island was made by parachute troops from Rachi Ridge. This was beaten off, and counter-attacks by our troops in the north and from the south drove the enemy from the high ground and re-established our communications. On Monday our counter-attack was renewed, but in the face of unceasing attack from the air it was unsuccessful. That night the enemy succeeded in landing reinforcements. On Tuesday, attacks developed against our headquarters with heavy bombs. But the Commander then thought if he could get further reinforcements he could hold out. Affairs, however, deteriorated. The result was that the island fell. The garrison had been fighting incessantly for five days and exposed to concentrated bombing attacks. In the end this produced a weariness too great to be resisted."

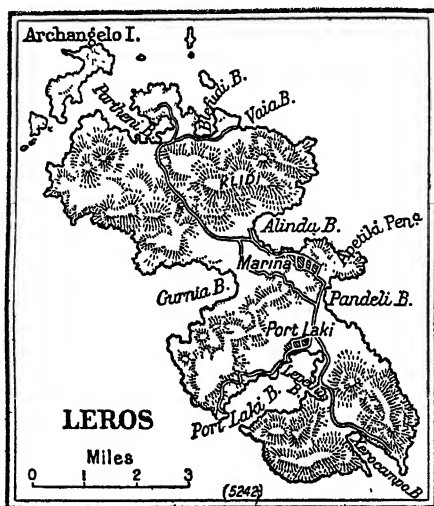
On November 18 General Wilson, Commander-in-Chief, Middle East, in a defence of these operations, claimed that the Germans had been obliged to draw on their garrisons in the Balkans and Crete for their Aegean counter-offensive, and that they had transferred aircraft from Denmark, Russia and France to cover their attack. The Germans had lost heavily. Three lighters and a Siebel ferry "packed with troops" had been sunk in the last 36 hours of the attack and they were believed to have contained between 750 and 1,000 men altogether.

General Wilson said that units of the Brandenburg Division and of the garrison of Crete had taken part in the attack. The Germans had begun their attack with 2,500 men¹ and he believed that they had been heavily reinforced on the last night of the fighting. It was presumed that the sudden end of the battle was brought about by the enemy's capture of Brigadier Tilney and the Command post and Headquarters of the garrison. He did not explain why no measures had been taken to prevent such an accident from causing the surrender of the entire garrison. In Parliament Mr. Attlee said that it was estimated that at least 4,000 Germans had been drowned, which seemed a high figure if General Wilson's estimate of the enemy's initial strength was correct. He maintained that the operation had contained superior enemy forces during a critical period of our invasion of Italy. He did not, however, make it clear how the transfer of German troops from Crete or the Balkan Peninsula had assisted our Italian campaign, or indeed what effect it could have on the general situation if we were not ready to attack the weakened German garrison of Crete or to land elsewhere in Greece or in Yugoslavia.

After capturing Leros the Germans shot several Italian officers who, with their men, had taken part in the defence of the island, and did not appear to have surrendered prematurely, as their troops on Rhodes had done. They then prepared to attack Samos, which was occupied by

¹ Reuter, Cairo message of November 18.

a small British force, a Greek regular battalion from Egypt, Greek irregulars of the E.L.A.S. organization (q.v. Section 2 of this chapter) and a larger force of Italians. Thanks to the influence of the Metropolitan of Samos, Bishop Ireneos, the Greeks, of whatever party, had worked well together and M. Sophoulis, Minister of



Social Welfare, who visited the island from Egypt on behalf of the exiled Government, was well received. But the fall of Leros isolated Samos. The Germans began to bomb the island. On November 22 the War Office announced its evacuation in the following terms :

Having accomplished their task, all British and Greek, and a proportion of the Italian troops, have been evacuated without loss from Samos, together with a large portion of the civil population. This evacuation was carried out several days ago. The German High Command have now announced that their troops have taken Samos. Patrol and harassing operations in the Aegean by the Allied forces continue.

The failure of these operations had a disheartening effect on the Greeks, who knew how brutally the Germans had treated the population of the recaptured islands. It must have discouraged the Turks whom Allied diplomacy was wooing, and it heartened the depressed Bulgars. In

this country, surprise that the Germans had been able to repeat their Cretan success more than two years after that painful lesson was expressed in many quarters. The public also wondered what had become of the Ninth Army which had held Syria, Palestine and latterly Egypt in such strength. One could only presume that this force had been largely transferred to other theatres of war. Meanwhile the knowledge that the campaign had cost the Allies and the "co-belligerent" Italians fully 12,000 men, mostly prisoners, a number of aircraft, a Greek destroyer, which was bombed at anchor off Leros and sank, was none the less galling for all the official claims that we had inflicted "irreplaceable" losses on the enemy.

4 : THE LEBANESE CRISIS

On November 11 the arrest by order of the French Delegate-General, M. Helleu, of the President of the Lebanon, M. Bishara Khoury, its Prime Minister, Riadh es-Sulh Beg, and seven other Ministers announced a crisis in the relations of the French National Committee with the Mandatory State of the Lebanon. The causes of this unfortunate affair must be briefly outlined before the sequel to the arrests is recorded.

The Allied and Associated Powers in 1920 had entrusted a Mandate over the Lebanon (and Syria) to France. After various minor troubles a Treaty of Friendship and Alliance was negotiated between French and Lebanese representatives and was ratified on November 17, 1936, by the Lebanese Parliament. But it was not ratified by the French Chamber and therefore remained inoperative as did a similar treaty with Syria. When British and Free French troops invaded Syria and Lebanon in 1941 the British Government issued a statement explaining why they had taken this action and announcing the issue of a statement by General Catroux on behalf of General de Gaulle guaranteeing the liberty and independence of Syria and the Lebanon and undertaking to negotiate a Treaty to secure both objects (q.v. *The Seventh Quarter*, pp. 100-01). On November 26, 1941, General Catroux made a public statement declaring the Lebanon an independent sovereign State to which he promised French support on the lines of the proposed Treaty of 1936. The Lebanon would in return place its aerodromes, ports, etc. at the disposal of the Allies. In the following year diplomatic representatives were appointed to the Lebanon (and Syria). Major-General Sir Edward Spears was the first British Minister to both States. The spring of 1943 saw another move forward. General Catroux proclaimed the restoration of the free Constitution of the Lebanon and promulgated decrees providing for the holding of elections and the

setting-up of a provisional government to preside over these. The elections were duly held in August. Parliament met in September and elected a Christian (Maronite) President of the Republic.¹ He called on Riadh es-Sulh Beg to form a Ministry, which he did. The new Government opened discussions with M. Helleu, the Delegate-General of the Committee of National Liberation who had succeeded General Catroux, concerning the measures required to make the full sovereignty and independence of the Lebanon effective.

While little is known of the course of these negotiations, it would appear that while the French Delegate, acting on instructions from Algiers, held that a treaty of alliance between the C.N.L. and the Lebanon must be a prior condition of the establishment of Lebanese sovereign independence, the Lebanese Government held that they could only negotiate a treaty when they possessed full sovereign rights. They based their claim to independence primarily on the Atlantic Charter rather than on previous French declarations ; they did not acknowledge the legal existence of the Mandate ; and the Lebanese Press sometimes gave the impression that the Government doubted whether the Committee at Algiers had the status to negotiate a treaty ! General de Gaulle's view was that the juridical situation arising out of the Mandate was incontestable. The Mandate had been conferred by the League, and until the League or a similar international body relieved France of that responsibility the Mandate stood. The Lebanese Government, however, were resolved to have their own way and decided to amend their Constitution in a manner which was incompatible with the Mandate, and seemed, indeed, unnecessarily careless of French susceptibilities. M. Helleu urged moderation and went to Algiers to consult the C.N.L., and on November 6 the French authorities at Beirut read a statement from that body to representatives of the Syrian Press. The C.N.L., it said,

could not admit the validity of a decision by the Lebanese Government to amend the Constitution without French consent ; and, it was convinced that the Lebanese nation recognized that respect for contracts was the foundation of the independence and liberty of nations. The statement also reminded

¹ Since the Lebanon was enlarged to include a strong Moslem minority it has been customary to appoint a Christian President and a Moslem Premier.

the Lebanon Government that France had resolved to grant the Lebanon complete independence after negotiations conducted "in a spirit of friendly collaboration."

Unimpressed by the appeal to the sanctity of contracts, the Lebanese Government drove ahead. Their Bill for the Revision of the Constitution was passed unanimously by Parliament on November 8, and M. Helleu, returning from Algiers where he had gone to take counsel with the C.N.L., returned (November 10) to find himself faced with a *fait accompli*. Next morning, perhaps exceeding his Government's instructions, he had the President, the Prime Minister, and seven Ministers arrested, dissolved Parliament, and committed the provisional administration of the Lebanon to M. Edde, a former President. There was rioting at Beirut, Sidon and Tripoli-in-Syria. A few persons were killed, but it may be said at once that several reputable journalists considered that the gravity of the situation was somewhat exaggerated by British official sources, themselves the victims of Oriental exaggeration. The situation, however, was strained and while the British Minister at Beirut expressed his disapproval of the Delegate-General's action, the British Government instructed our Resident Minister in Algiers to communicate their views to the French authorities. In Mr. Harold Macmillan's absence, Mr. Makins, his deputy, saw General de Gaulle and M. Massigli, Commissioner for Foreign Affairs. He said that

"Britain's deep concern in the Lebanese crisis arose from two bases. First, we had associated ourselves with the French promise of independence in 1941 and could not therefore see Lebanese rights overthrown. Secondly, Lebanon was part of a vitally important strategic area and we could not afford the risk of popular disturbances." (*The Times*, November 15.)

The attitude of General de Gaulle and the C.N.L. is outlined elsewhere in this volume.¹ General Catroux was sent to Beirut, where he found the situation easier, but observed that the interest evinced by other Arab or Arabic-speaking nations in the Lebanese problem—an interest of which sympathetic messages from King Abdulaziz ibn Saud, King Farouk of Egypt, Nahas Pasha, Nury Pasha es-Said and other leaders to the

¹ *q.v.* Chapter VIII, Section 2, "France."

President of the Lebanon were symptoms—was likely to complicate the issue. He therefore set to work at once (November 17) to solve a problem which might never have arisen had the French kept their heads and had certain British elements in the Levant remembered that its inhabitants have always shown an uncommon dexterity in setting their European protectors or would-be patrons by the ears. After hinting that British interference in the Lebanon should be confined to military or quasi-military matters, leaving France free to protect her political interests, and expressing his opinion that the appointment of an inter-Allied Commission to deal with the Franco-Lebanese difference would multiply and magnify its difficulties, he proposed to liberate the President and the arrested Ministers. Algiers agreed, and on November 21 the C.N.L. issued a statement saying that it had decided to follow the General's proposals to reinstate President Khoury.

"with whom the Commissioner of State is invited to negotiate the necessary measures for the rapid re-establishment of constitutional life in the Lebanon . . . The Committee has further decided to liberate the Lebanese in office on November 8 and . . . has confirmed the decision to open negotiations with the Syrian Government necessary to harmonize the French Mandate with the régime of independence promised by France in the proclamation of 1941. After the re-establishment of constitutional life in Lebanon similar negotiations will be opened with the Lebanese Government." M. Helleu, the statement added, had been asked to return to Algiers. M. Bonnet, Commissioner for Information, told the Press that the decision of the Committee was regarded as "a satisfactory preliminary solution to the problem, which should lead to a broad final settlement," and the C.N.L. believed that their decisions should satisfy all parties.

On December 23 the Lebanese Premier informed Parliament that the Franco-Syrian-Lebanese negotiations in Damascus had reached a satisfactory conclusion. They had been carried out in a friendly atmosphere and on a basis of equality.

Agreement, he said, had been reached and signed by all parties to transfer all powers hitherto exercised by the French as mandatories to the Syrian and Lebanese Governments, together with the "common interests," such as Customs which had previously been administered under French control. The French staffs of these administrations would shortly be transferred to the service of the two Arab Governments, who would henceforth be competent to legislate and administer in all matters. Supplementary agreements on other matters, e.g. the future of the local forces formed by the French, would be drawn up and signed later.

Before leaving for Algiers General Catroux, who once again had done his country a great service, addressed the French community. A mandate, he said, had always implied preparation of the mandated states for independence. "A political power," he added, "which ceases to be accepted by a nation but is simply endured, is no longer an effective power." France felt that the time had come to lift from her own shoulders a large part of her responsibilities to these States, and had thus regained their confidence.

So ended an incident which if, perhaps, over-written, nevertheless gave evidence of the growing strength of Arab national feeling and of the importance given by "small nations" to the Atlantic Charter. Its least satisfactory outcome was the increase of French distrust of the British in the Middle or, more accurately, the Near East. Between the wars the conflict between British policy in Europe, which accepted French interests and claims in the Levant, and the numerous British supporters, for Imperial or romantic reasons, of Arab union who always took the Arab side, had caused a deal of friction between the officials on both sides of the frontier between the two Mandated Territories, Palestine-Transjordan and Lebanon-Syria. After the Syrian armistice, however, a number of British specialists appeared in Syria and Lebanon as political officers. Their relations with the French officials, many of whom were tarred with the Vichy brush but must remain since there was no possibility of filling their places, were bad. In the words of a Special Correspondent of *The Times* who visited Syria and Lebanon in late December and early January :

"while good relations were being successfully up built by the men of the fighting forces, the relations between the British and French administrative services steadily worsened.

Local politicians, chiefly in the Lebanon, were quick to spot the growing estrangement. Those who had long been opponents of the French, and even pro-Axis, turned bodily over to the British, whose friendship they tried to cultivate by various means. They succeeded so well that the French soon came to look upon the clamour for independence as a disguise for the transfer from French to British protection and . . . to believe that that was what the British wanted. The statesmanship of a Catroux could have straightened things out and prevented any rash action by either side ; but, unfortunately for Anglo-French relations, he was called away to higher duties in Algiers. . . ."¹

It may fairly be inferred from the silence of the Correspondent, that in his view Sir Edward Spears did not fill the gap.

¹ *The Times*, January 21, 1944.

CHAPTER III

THE GERMAN-SOVIET WAR

*By Lieut.-Colonel H. de Watteville, C.B.E., M.A.
(Oxon), p.s.c.*

The closing days of September, 1943, had witnessed an apparent end to the gradual withdrawal of the German armies along the entire southern half of the Eastern Front; and this withdrawal had then reached an irregular and ill-defined line which corresponded approximately to that of the middle and lower reaches of the River Dnieper as far south as the apex of its great eastward bend, from which point a more solid German front followed a strongly entrenched line to the Black Sea. On the German side the laborious movement was carried out with generally some tactical skill and without hazarding any truly major battle. The Russians, for their part, had hustled back their retreating enemy, but had been unable, or perhaps had hesitated, to do much more than evict the retreating invaders out of this position or that strong-point at the cost of sharp rear-guard fighting. So long as the average speed of the advance never slackened they had seemed content to recover their lost territory and to claim each of the more important gains as a resounding victory. To that extent they had been fully justified in celebrating the remarkable westward advance to the Dnieper as a magnificent military success.

Whether or not the Germans had really planned to hold the actual line of that great river still remains uncertain: most indications would appear to point to some such decision. Far more certain, however, is the fact that they had been reckoning on the approach of the rainy season to put an effective brake on the Russian progress. As early as September 20 the Berlin press had begun alluding to the coming of the rains, with obvious

anxiety, as a possible turning-point in the campaign. Bad weather, it is evident, was being awaited not only as the signal for a respite from Russian pursuit, but also as the ardently desired occasion for a restoration of a stronger front, as well as a slack period during which the German armies might be reorganized, reinforced and re-equipped. But this opportunity was not to be afforded to them. The Russians, so coming events were to show, had been able to lay their plans, to organize their armies and to make good their rearward communications in such a fashion that they were able to continue driving forward with renewed energy and with fresh troops, in spite of climatic change. By so doing they were to meet with a sure reward. No army, however solid its morale might be, however brilliant its leadership had shown itself, could withstand the corroding effects of such losses, mishaps, and a complete surrender of the initiative, as had been the fate of the German armies ever since their colossal setback in the July battles round Kursk, Byelgorod and Orel. The grave errors of judgment which had brought them to this plight were now to be followed by yet an equally momentous miscalculation whose results have even now not yet exhausted themselves.

Confident in their obtaining a breathing space in which to prepare a new line of defence along which to prepare for the Russian winter offensive, they had planned to withdraw all stores and heavy equipment to such distances as would enable them to face yet another "winter" campaign such as they had twice survived,⁷ and, if necessary, to renew their strategy of the "elastic defence." Such a plan they had actually, so it would seem, brought to some stage of completion along the line that extended between Zaporozhe and the Black Sea, that is from the apex of the great Dnieper bend southward to the coast. Nowhere else to the north of this front had they been granted sufficient time, except along the River Dnieper, far away northwards from Kiev, to make ready to withstand a Russian onslaught in elaborately prepared positions. Yet in view of the depletion of their armies

and of the scarcity of reserves, it was imperative for the German High Command to prepare some formidable obstacles to meet a Russian advance which they rightly regarded as inevitable during the winter.

To the consternation of the German High Command, then, the opening days of October disclosed no relaxation of the mighty Russian effort : there was not a sign of a check. On the contrary, these very days proved conclusively that in spite of the season the Russians had mounted a most formidable offensive and that this was now being set in motion. In this purpose the Russians were aided by the growing disparity in armed strength which was now beginning to be more patently revealed between the two sides. The enormous losses in men and material suffered by the Germans in the costly July struggles in the Kursk and Orel salients had never been made good. These had, in fact, been accentuated by casualties suffered in the withdrawal to the Dnieper. Moreover, any such losses had doubtless been intensified by the action of the Russian guerillas ; also by the abandonment of material and sick and by the wear and tear of retreat. What numbers of German wounded and stragglers were done to death by the Russian country folk during this whole period of elastic defence may never be known. A few German tales that have trickled through can only leave much detail to be filled in by the imagination. Anyhow, the resulting numerical weakness of the German armies was still being largely concealed by the success with which the German High Command seemed ever capable of throwing in a powerful attack at the exact point where good military judgment seemed to hold out a promise that such a stroke would exert the maximum effect on the whole campaign. At home these remarkable efforts were ably seconded by the clever propaganda which magnified the warlike deeds of German troops whilst exaggerating the numerical superiority of the Russians. Such superiority unquestionably existed and was rapidly growing—a state of affairs which might be regarded as the direct result of the German doctrine of war, which encourages continuance of attack regardless

of the losses thereby incurred : in the words of Foch, already quoted, "the strategy of the buffalo."

At the beginning of October the Battle of the Dnieper, to use the Russian expression, was still in progress, whilst Russian pressure against the fortified line running from Zaporozhe to the sea increased in weight. In addition, on either flank of this battle there continued some appreciable activity. So away to the south-east on the Kuban peninsula the Germans were slowly but surely being made to give ground. Again, on the White Russian front styled by the Germans "The Fatherland Front," Russian pressure was growing ; on October 1 the Red Army stood at the outer defences of Gomel. Still further to the north, as far as Vitebsk, the Germans were making renewed and desperate efforts to check the Russian advance as well as to save Orsha, the main base of the *Luftwaffe* on this sector. But the Russians were not to be denied. By October 9 the whole Kuban bridgehead had been cleared of Germans who in the process are said to have lost 20,000 killed and 3,000 prisoners.

Even so, these flank attacks were but a prelude to a movement of far wider scope. On October 7 the Russian High Command announced the start of a general offensive against the entire front. In the far north, Kirichi, on the River Volkhov, very soon fell to the Russians. More important still, the important rail junction of Nevel was stormed. This latter gain severed the direct German communications leading to their forces investing Leningrad. South of the Pripet marshes Russian attacks were meeting with success. Across the lower middle Dnieper three bridgeheads were firmly established : north of Kiev, south of Pereyasavl and south-east of Kremenchug—the last-named town had already fallen to the Russians on September 29. The Germans struggled hard to prevent these river crossings being enlarged, but to little effect. It is said that Ukrainian guerillas performed services of great value during these operations. In the meantime on the Fatherland Front the Russians had penetrated the suburbs of Gomel on the 11th : like-

wise they were pressing on Vitebsk. The Germans themselves admitted withdrawals along these sectors. On the other hand, the presence of powerful German reinforcements was making itself felt to the north of Kiev ; with their help the Germans were able to repel the Russian advance to the north of the confluence of the Dnieper and Pripiet Rivers.

Nothing is more remarkable during this period than the manner and the apparent ease with which the Russians would cross great water obstacles. To some extent this faculty might be regarded as largely due to the increasing numerical weakness of the Germans. The distances separating the various points of crossing might be so great and communications so poor that they could not hope to reach every Russian thrust in useful time ; in addition they were greatly handicapped by the activity of the Russian guerillas. Yet even making every additional allowance for the incalculable advantages derived from a superior intelligence service and from the enjoyment of a complete initiative, the fullest praise can be accorded to the Russian engineer, road and railway troops employed. The best part of their bridging equipment was clearly most modern and supplied on a lavish scale. The degree of their resulting superiority can be gauged by the report of a German divisional general in which he stated that the Russians had been able to cross the Dnieper in strength by means of fast motor boats more quickly than his own troops had been able to reach their battle stations on the farther river banks even though in full possession of an undamaged bridge. It would appear that the Russians on such occasions would select points for their crossing where visibility might be faulty or where marshes might complicate the enemy's task or the existence of an island facilitate their own. The whole process recalls the British crossing of the River Piave at the Grave di Papadopoli in October 1918, when the bridging resources at the disposal of the British sappers and the excellent Italian *pontieri* on that occasion were rudimentary compared to those now at the disposal of the Russians.

Nevertheless, even though benefiting from such advantages, the Russian infantry put across a wide stream on any material that would float must at times have had a hard task to resist heavy German attacks, strongly supported as they were by tanks and artillery. The result speaks highly for the newly found tactical skill of the Russian infantry companies as well as for their remarkable tenacity. Once across the river these troops would make for any rocky gullies¹ along which they might progress out of range of flat-trajectory artillery. Every device was employed to silence the enemy's guns. Next, other passages of the stream at several such points would be carried out in such a way as to perplex the Germans as to the main point of crossing. Gradually the infantry detachments would be strengthened as best might be, although tanks and any force of heavier artillery might not be able to cross the stream for some time. Finally a heavy bridge would be constructed at one single point and over this structure the heavy Russian arms would cross. The rapidity with which this last type of bridge had been thrown across the Dnieper at Kremenchug in September had utterly confounded the Germans. The Russian reward was great, for this crossing of the Dnieper may be regarded as the starting point of the whole operations to the south of the river on this sector of the front.

Undismayed by the Russian passage of the Dnieper at Kremenchug, followed as it was by further crossings at other points, the Germans were determined to hold their fortified line Zaporozhe-Melitopol to the Black Sea at all costs. The Russians were equally determined to drive their enemies out of this position. By October 13 they were on the outskirts of both towns. In the case of Melitopol the approach to the town had occupied the Russians three long days of fierce fighting; even then they could not announce the capture of the town until October 23, that is, after ten days of ferocious house-to-house fighting. Zaporozhe was not so stubbornly defended. It had fallen on October 14 after five days

¹ These ravines or *balkas* are a feature of the lower Dnieper.

of a fierce struggle in which, according to a German report, three Russian armies (*sic*) had been employed.

The importance attached by the Germans to Melitopol is illustrated by the nature of the struggle that took place for its possession. This may be said to have reached a veritable climax of ferocity. Nowhere are the Germans said to have left more dead since the bloodiest days before Stalingrad. Indeed the whole battle recalled that struggle in more ways than one. Savage street fighting and house fighting continued for over a week. The houses of Melitopol are built solidly of stone, and every one of them had to be taken by storm. The Germans had turned the centre of the city into a powerful centre of resistance. Machine-gunners and auto-riflemen were stationed in every attic and cellar. All attempts to bypass this district from the south were met by strong counter-attacks in which the Germans used tanks and self-propelled guns. But the German defence, now well saturated by artillery, particularly mortars, had already been seriously weakened by the preliminary Soviet bombardment and the onslaught of Russian aircraft. The Soviet tanks and infantry were thus able to capture several important positions in the first few hours of fighting. The smashing of these vital strong points created large breaches in the German defence. This had an immediate effect on the situation in other sectors of the assault. The Red Army advance gathered speed.

Nevertheless the Germans would not give in and mounted as many as ten counter-attacks in a single day. Still the Russians invariably held on. In the Likhavka area the advance was particularly hard, and could be measured in hundreds of yards only on some days, because the Soviet troops were two-thirds surrounded by strong enemy fortifications defended by large infantry and tank forces.

Russian accounts give a remarkable picture of the fighting. In the centre of the city the Germans had turned a large brick house standing at a street intersection into a formidable strong point barring the approaches to the square. They had installed a gun and a number of light mortars in the house. Machine-gunners and automatic riflemen were ensconced in the upper and lower floors and the basement. A blockhouse had been erected on each flank of the house, so that the Germans were able to cover the

approaches to the square with a wall of fire. All attempts to by-pass this fortress failed. Everywhere the Germans had installed anti-tank weapons in attics and on the roofs of houses. Soviet infantry moving along the main streets of Melitopol came under heavy fire from tommy-guns and machine-guns. Tanks following behind came under fire from anti-tank rifles and 25-mm. cannon stationed on nearby roofs. Every house and every roof in Melitopol had to be cleared.

The Russian advance was seriously held up. So small groups went into action and broke through the walls of two neighbouring houses, by-passed the strong points at street intersections, and invaded the stronghold from the rear. After a brief hand-to-hand fight the enemy garrison was annihilated. This decided the issue in the neighbouring blocks.

Soviet automatic riflemen and sappers next combed out the back yards and gardens, which afforded good cover for the enemy. The limited outlook and firing range, the restricted scope for manoeuvring and the difficulty of directing the attacking troops added to their troubles. Small units of riflemen and sappers supported by individual guns and tanks had to do most of the fighting.

German counter-attacks continued, usually supported by tanks and self-propelled guns. Their tommy-gunners tried to filter unperceived along house walls and stone fences, and through back yards. Groups of five or six tanks and self-propelled guns moved along parallel streets, maintaining ceaseless fire, probing for weak spots in the Soviet positions and trying to divert the attention of the attack and so the fighting would spread from street to street.

At Zaporozhe it had already been much the same story. Here the town was defended by works of all kinds and by a huge anti-tank ditch, filled with at least six feet of water. The Russians decided to force these defences at two points, even though there could be no question of taking the enemy unawares. The German patrols were incessantly active; they also made frequent counter-attacks, though with small forces. For this reason the storming of the fortifications was preceded by long-drawn-out aerial and artillery preparation. When the artillery fire shifted to the German trenches and the first line of strong points, assault groups attacked the anti-tank ditch. Every imaginable device, from poles to "living ladders," was used to get across. The tanks crossed the ditch over assault bridges and through passages blasted by the artillery; then, co-operating with the assault groups, they would attack the nearest strong points.

The Germans fell back westward, whereupon the Soviet tanks reached the highway leading to the city. But there they were held up by a flanking barrage from a large park. A series of fierce German counter-attacks, launched by forces ranging from a battalion to a regiment and supported by twenty-five to thirty tanks, followed. The battle raged without change

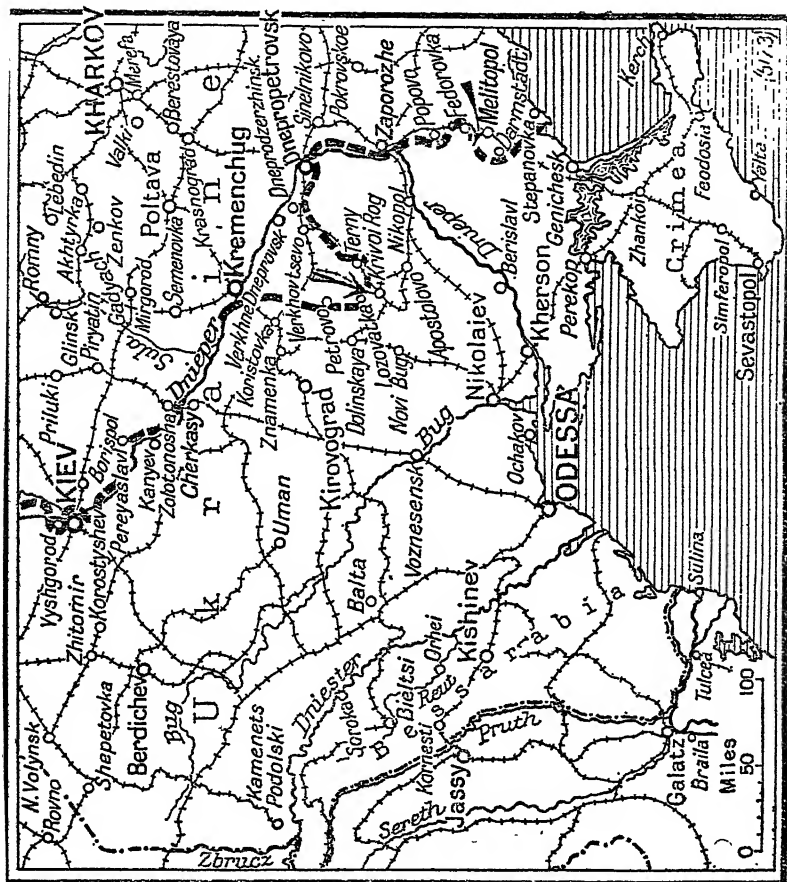
until night. However, the Germans failed to restore the situation and sustained heavy casualties.

Next day the Soviet troops continued their concentric thrusts, deepening the dents in the German defences. As a result of a flanking manoeuvre and a night attack, the enemy's fortified curve was breached at three points. The main defence belt could then be liquidated. The next task was to breach the second fortified belt at top speed, so as to prevent the enemy from withdrawing behind it. The Germans had apparently hoped that they would be able to break contact with the Soviet troops under cover of night, and confront them next morning in the second fortified line. But the Red Army men continued throughout the night to hammer at the enemy's surviving strong points. Tanks and motorized forces poured into the breaches to exploit the success. So the first Russian column of tanks and self-propelled artillery at last broke through to the northern outskirts, while a second column of tanks and motorized detachments, advancing along the highway and gullies, broke through and pushed on to the southern section of the city itself. The assault groups which followed the former tank column soon gained complete control of the railway yards, while rifle units mopped up enemy groups surrounded in the strong points. Severe fighting then shifted to the city streets and for five days the scene was similar to that enacted at Melitopol.

Elsewhere, Russian progress was not rapid, but it was maintained. Towards Gomel the Germans were driven back across the River Sozh. To the south of Kiev, by October 14 Russian tanks and heavy artillery were crossing the Dnieper in force.

The Germans had made a great effort to contain all these dangerous advances. The *Luftwaffe* concentrated all its available resources against the Russian pressure southwards from Kremenchug. Fierce air-battles took place. The cream of the *Waffen S.S.* divisions was thrown into the battle, regardless of loss. In spite of all, on October 7 the Russians claimed to have smashed the enemy's line to the south-east of Kremenchug along a front of nearly 30 and to a depth of over 16 miles; and beyond this limit the advance was being maintained until, on October 19, they had seized the rail junction of Znamenka. Progress, though far slower, was also continued south-eastwards, until the Russian base extended along the banks of the Dnieper for no less than 50 miles, thereby rendering their position secure against any German "sealing off" operation. Finally, on October 25, they had entered Dniepropetrovsk and Dnieprodzerzhinsk, whilst they stood within six miles of Krivoi Rog.

The first act of the Battle for the Dnieper crossings may be said to have ended. Beginning with the essential passage by the Russians of the river at Kremenchug on



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September 29, it had concluded with the smashing of the German defences at Melitopol, and finally with the capture of Dnepropetrovsk and Dnieprodzerzhinsk on October 25.

The Russian possession of the "middle" Dnieper was

now secure and effective. German press reports would speak of the recent battles as "hellish," and continued to stress the Russian numerical superiority as well as the superhuman devotion and courage of their own troops; they likened the Russian advance to a solid wall of armour advancing in one continuous line from Kremenchug to Melitopol and followed by hordes of barbaric infantry. Assuredly the Russians were always superior in numbers, but if the German accounts of the losses inflicted by them on the Russians were even remotely correct that superiority should have been dwindling. On October 11 and 12, for example, they claimed the destruction of 142 Russian aircraft for the loss of 6, and on October 20 and 21 they announced 190 Russian aeroplanes down at the cost of only six of their own. If such figures are correct the Russian advance becomes inexplicable.

The importance of the original Russian success at Kremenchug could not be over-estimated. Kremenchug is a large city from which railways and first-class highways fan out to all parts of the Ukraine. It is one of the most convenient of all the Dnieper crossings. Supplies for a large part of the German troops occupying the Ukrainian regions east of the Dnieper had passed through Kremenchug. When Red Army units moving southwards from Kremenchug broke through the enemy's troops, all the German communications radiating from the city were cut. Now, German army transports from the length and breadth of the Ukraine east of the Dnieper had been gathering in the vicinity of the city, as well as several thousands of Soviet people whom the Germans had herded for deportation to Germany. Kremenchug had, in fact, been the assembly point for enormous transports laden with looted grain and fodder. All the streets and squares, all the approaches to the bridges, all the surrounding villages were congested with troops, tanks, and trucks.

It is therefore clear that the Germans had every incentive to put up a bitter fight for this district. They counter-attacked in strength at the distant approaches to

the city, sparing neither men nor material. Units of several tank and infantry divisions which had retreated here from Kharkov and Poltava had concentrated in a small area twenty-five miles long and ten miles wide. They were only remnants, certainly. They had been worn out and drained of blood in the battles for the Ukraine. But they still had powerful artillery, and were abundantly supplied with machine-guns and automatic arms. They took up positions on the heights and in the hollows surrounding Kremenchug. They fortified themselves inside all the roadside villages.

These battles for and round Kremenchug were remarkable for the stubbornness of the defence and the vigour and speed of the Red Army's blows and tactical moves. It might easily have become a long-drawn-out operation, for the Germans held strong positions and were excellently armed. But two factors prevented such a development: the newly found skill of the Soviet troops and the fact that the German defences were held by men who had been beaten at Byelgorod, Kharkov and Poltava.¹

It has already been stated (see also *The Sixteenth Quarter*, Chapter III) that it seemed uncertain whether the Germans had intended to hold the line of the middle Dnieper. The easy Russian approach to Kiev lends substantial support to such views. On the other hand, the subsequent fierce German resistance encountered at several points, more particularly at Melitopol, would seem to point to a deliberate decision to hold the river bend. Conceivably the German High Command had entertained some desperate idea of keeping control of the apex of the bend and the Melitopol line in the hope that they might still be able to sally forth from that line and attack the Russian advance from round its southern flank. Such a possibility may appear to verge on the fantastic; but there is still needed some substantial explanation, beside mere motives of prestige or of economic expediency, to account for the protracted and despairing manner in which the German High Command, unless categorically ordered to pursue such a course,

¹ *Soviet War News*, October 10, 1943.

should cling on to the Nikopol and Krivoi Rog defences until long after a wiser strategy might have counselled their abandonment.

The confusion in higher German military circles was now profound. A Nazi party meeting had been held as far back as October 1 and 2; soon to be followed by another. There exists every reason to believe that the party bosses were at their wits' ends to find a solution to the *impasse* caused by their military failure. The brief pause that occurred after the fall of Kremenchug in the Russian advance sent the blood of premature optimism, and perhaps of relief, rushing to the heads of the German propaganda chiefs:

"On Thursday," stated the German radio, "the evening Soviet *communiqué* consisted of only one sentence, 'No change took place at the front.' This confirms 100 per cent that the German withdrawal to the Dnieper has come to an end." This respite was to be of short duration. The Russian reply was the announcement that the Kuban peninsula had been totally cleared. Still the momentary elation continued.

"In those hours when the tidal wave of the Russian offensive threatened to overwhelm the great dyke of German defence, every single problem faded away behind the great question whether the Eastern Front would hold or not. But it has held; and it will hold. The Bolsheviks have not succeeded in smashing the framework of the German front."¹

A fortnight later, on October 19, a veritable bombshell was sprung at an official press conference when Major Sommerfeld, official spokesman of the *Wehrmacht*, declared, "I deeply regret to have to announce that the Russians have broken through the German front in the East."² The effect of this pronouncement was such that on October 24 the Swedish correspondents in Berlin telegraphed to Stockholm that only one paper was publishing reports on the Eastern situation.³ On the evening of the 26th General Dittmar, falling back on threadbare quotations from Clausewitz as to the eventual dominance of the moral forces in war, sought to comfort his listeners with exhortations to put their trust in the supernatural

¹ *Münchener Neueste Nachrichten*, October 3, 1943.

² What a contrast to Dr. Dietrich's decisive and vainglorious announcement at a similar Press conference held on October 10, 1941, that the Soviet Armies had been totally and irretrievably destroyed! Could a more fateful *περιπέτεια* be found anywhere in Greek tragedy?

³ This was the *Deutsche Allgemeine Zeitung* for October 20, 1943.

moral strength of their *Führer*. From him, said Dittmar, must flow the inspiration to deeds of heroism in war that could only terminate in final victory.

In their confusion the Nazi propaganda chiefs had long been surpassing themselves. For instance, Dr. Goebbels in *Das Reich* for October 3 :

"If matters stood reversed, that is, if we were in the shoes of our enemies and the enemy in our own, we could suddenly observe how favourable was our prospect of victory." What could the little doctor ever mean? Dr. Ley would strike yet another note : "The refined treachery of the dwarfing, that congenital traitor and poisonous reptile, Victor Emmanuel, will yet lead to the greatest moral, military and economic victories which German history may have to show." (*Der Angriff*, September 26, 1943.)

Abundant evidence exists to prove the mental bewilderment and helpless rage of the Nazi authorities. And these feelings could only be the outcome of the fear of impending catastrophe.

The German military situation had indeed been gravely jeopardized by the four weeks' fighting that had begun with the crossing of the Dnieper at Kremenchug. The unity of their front had already been split when the Russians had made certain of reaching the Pripet marshes on the centre of the front. Even then their situation need not have proved so serious if they had been able to hold successfully the important triangle Vitebsk-Smolensk-Orsha in the north and the Kiev district in the south. With the loss of Smolensk, and still more the rapid subsequent fall of Kiev, there no longer remained a chance of their holding the line of the lower and middle Dnieper. Now, to make matters worse, they were being gravely attacked within the entire Dnieper bend. Yet further south the loss of Melitopol and Zaporozhe rendered their tenure of the Crimea and of the Black Sea coast highly precarious. Only the regaining of the initiative and considerable reinforcements could enable them to hold this seemingly inexorable Russian advance. Yet the main note of decision in the measures ordered by the German High Command did not extend beyond the mounting of heavy counter-attacks, first at one front, then at another, in the hopes of paralysing the Russian leadership over a very wide front : such a strategy might

have proved remunerative earlier in the war ; but since the battle of Kursk the Germans no longer possessed the inexhaustible resources to indulge in such a policy, whereas the Russians had been steadily acquiring the numbers, the armament and the skill to resist such strokes—and with satisfactory results.

Yet this was not the total effect of the Russian successes. To the north the fall of Nevel had cut the German communications leading to von Kückler's armies still besieging Leningrad, whilst the Russian attacks had freed the main railway line leading to that city. Its complete deliverance could now be only a question of time. Only in the Crimea could the German High Command claim that they stood firm and could "hold what we have."

This evil plight of the Germans had grown more critical from the fact that, as outlined in *The Sixteenth Quarter*, the Russian armies had been divided into three seasonal groups—summer, intermediate and winter, each equipped to cope with probable prevalent climatic conditions ; and that the summer groups had fought on a system of three front-line reliefs. The proof of such a distribution could now be found in an official Russian statement from which it may be gathered that at the points of passage across the Dnieper *fresh divisions* were being employed. The frequent mention of Cossack cavalry divisions is a further indication of the Russian organization. To the Germans there must have appeared to be no end to the vista of misfortune that was opening before them.

On October 27 the Russians once more broke through the German defence south-west of Melitopol and thus began their advance towards the mouth of the Dnieper across the Nogaisk Steppe. Meanwhile an important operation had developed within the Dnieper bend. The skeleton of the plan lay in the fact that there were now three Russian armies converging towards this centre of the bend in such a fashion that the Russian High Command clearly hoped to trap the German forces remaining at its eastern end. These three Russian army groups

(from right to left) were the Second Ukrainian Groups, under Marshal Koniev, advancing due southwards from Kremenchug on to Krivoi Rog and the vital railway junction of Apostolovo ; secondly, the Third Ukrainian Group, commanded by General Malinovski, now able to move south and south-westwards from the various river crossings around and at Dniepropetrovsk ; lastly, there was the Fourth Ukrainian Group, now at Zaporozhe and on the Nogaisk Steppe, commanded by General Tolbukhin, advancing generally westwards.

The best prospect which the Germans possessed of avoiding some disaster within the apex of the bend similar to that suffered by the original Sixth Army at Stalingrad lay in keeping open the last railway left open to them, namely, the line running from Nikopol through Apostolovo and thence south-westwards. Indeed, Krivoi Rog and Nikopol were said by the Germans themselves to be the pillars of the gateway to safety. Even though the stubborn German resistance at Melitopol had considerably retarded Tolbukhin's progress westwards, their situation remained critical. Consequently von Manstein, the commander of the German resuscitated Sixth Army in the Dnieper bend, gathered all his available forces and, joining with von Kleist's Fourth Armoured Army, made a furious onslaught on the Russians at Krivoi Rog. The German Nikopol bridgehead, on the left bank of the Dnieper, received orders to hold out at all costs. The Krivoi Rog battle was fiercely contested. The Russians lacked the power to do more than resist the furious German attacks with the utmost tenacity ; they even gave ground at some points. Lack of information surrounds these operations with some mystery. On the whole it may be said that the Russians were able to hold their ground, but failed to take Krivoi Rog. In fact, the Germans both there and at Nikopol had even gained a little ground. The battle can thus be said to have saved the German forces in the bend ; for the Russians failed to close the trap and so the Germans gradually drew clear. The rapid progress made by Tolbukhin's Fourth Group across the Nogaisk Steppe towards Kherson and the

mouth of the river availed but little, although it served to cut off the Crimea where some ineffective landing and other lesser attempts made by the Russians did not win back the peninsula.

Nevertheless the German assaults at Krivoi Rog evoked from the Russians a characteristic reply in the form of a new offensive at Kiev, carried out by the First Ukrainian Group under General Vatutin. The situation around Kiev had long been peculiar. The Russians had been allowed to reach the outskirts of the city and had finally effected crossings of the Dnieper to the north and some distance to the south of it. But the city itself they had never attacked. Now this was to change. On November 4 Priorka, only three miles distant from the centre of the city, had fallen; the railway to Korosten was cut. On the 6th the city itself was carried by assault.

The fate of Kiev was decided on the river bank defences north and south of the town, and it was there—to the north—that the fiercest fighting, caused by the extension of the Soviet bridgeheads, developed. North of the town the Russian line formed an irregular wedge towards the west, overlooking the heights and the edge of the outskirts of the Ukrainian capital. South of Kiev the front followed the line of the Dnieper, running eventually to the east.

The German divisions fought with exceptional fury. They not only did everything to hold back the advancing Soviet troops, sparing no effort or sacrifice, but even tried to throw them right back across the Dnieper. Picked units, made up of S.S., tank and other divisions, were flung into the first line of the fighting. Counter-attacks were launched one after the other by troops brought from other sectors of the front or from the deep rear. Sometimes forces of as much as two infantry regiments, with as many as 100 to 120 tanks, took part in these attacks. But step by step the Soviet troops extended their bridgeheads on the right bank of the Dnieper.

At the same time as this fighting raged for the extension of the bridgeheads, the Soviet Command carried out a general regrouping of forces and brought up fresh

reserves. There was an unceasing powerful flow from the eastern to the western bank of regiments, tanks and guns. When the forces were concentrated and correctly disposed, the spring which had been wound up to its utmost limits suddenly uncoiled. It was as if an enormous hammer blow had been released against the German fortifications. The Soviet artillery, from well-hidden positions on the western bank, broke out into a devastating hurricane of fire. Hundreds of Soviet planes pinned the enemy to the ground.

On the very first day, in a number of sectors, the outer defences of the German advanced line were completely broken and Soviet tanks drove a wedge through the bloody, demoralized first line of the German fortifications. Nothing could save the situation for the Germans—neither their advantageous positions nor their large concentrated forces. Soviet tanks on November 5 burst into Svetoshina, cutting the main road of the German retreat to the west. Dislodging and wiping out the enemy, the Red Army troops marched on relentlessly, and at dawn on November 6 took the town by storm.

Here is an eye-witness tale of the capture of the city :¹

The battle raged all night at the walls of Kiev. Flames seethed and hovered over the city. The German incendiaries were working feverishly. Explosions could be heard, and after each report a new core of fire glowed in the blackness of the night.

From our observation post it seemed that Kiev was one sea of flames. I could see the eyes of our men fill with tears at the sight of the burning city. They had seen so much already. It would not have been strange if they had forgotten how to weep. But they wept for Kiev. . . .

Everywhere fires, debris, ruin.

Entering a liberated city with the army is a heart-rending experience. In Priorka and in Podol weeping women embraced the tired, smoke-stained soldiers, who were still feeling the strain of recent battle. Glass splinters crunched under their feet as they marched. I sensed their mingled elation and grief, their poignant pity for the women, old men and children who came forward to meet them, the people of Kiev, with faces ravaged by torment and long-deferred hope. . . .

Kiev was half empty when our troops entered it. The Germans had evicted all the inhabitants from the centre, from Podol and the monastery district, and proclaimed the city a military zone. Long before the battle the compulsory deportation of inhabitants to Germany began. We were told of frightful scenes enacted at Kiev station only a couple of days ago. The Germans had herded the people into goods wagons, crowded almost to bursting. Those who could not be packed in they shot on the spot.

¹ *Soviet War News*, November 10, 1943.

Though the battle had been fierce, it had been short. So the Russians seem to have been able to continue advancing westwards forthwith. On the 7th, Fastov, 40 miles south-west of Kiev, was taken ; and the movement continued. The Germans admitted the loss of the city on the 6th: the High Command had decided to evacuate the place, so said the German reports, only to draw the Russians forward and expose them to serious defeat. They had completely failed to trap the German armies. "It must be bitter for the Russians," so ended the announcer, "to have to confess that in spite of the great efforts they had made, they were again defeated."

The operations which now took place are still rather obscure, although history may well show them to have been of great importance and of high military interest. At first the Germans did not appear to be in any position to offer serious opposition to Vatutin's westward movements. To the north-west of Kiev by the 9th the Russians had extended their hold to within 30 miles of Korosten railway junction and to 12 miles of the mouth of the Pripet. Analogous movements went on farther north in the Gomel area where Rechitza was captured on the 17th ; also Korosten on the same day. Long before that, however, and as soon as he was satisfied that he was safe from interference from the direction of the Pripet marshes, that is from the north, Vatutin had already begun to push on more boldly westwards.

In the meantime, on November 12, the first German reaction made itself felt when von Manstein set in motion a weighty and determined counter-attack just after the Russians had entered Zhitomir. He finally assembled more than six armoured and at least six infantry divisions,¹ that is, some 150,000 troops, to carry out a stroke which was thoroughly typical of German strategy. It was designed to strike a massive blow at one flank of the

¹ Von Hoth had three armoured divisions, the 7th, 8th and 12th. He was reinforced by the solitary armoured division from Norway, the 25th. From the Balkans arrived the Adolf Hitler Division ; from Greece came the 1st Division. Eventually there arrived the 16th and 24th Divisions from Italy, where, owing to the unfavourable terrain, they had been employed as infantry. This gives a full total of eight armoured divisions.

enemy's advance well back from the farthest points reached by him. The method almost savoured of the text-book ; it was one that von Manstein had already employed on four different occasions, so that Vatutin, relying on his superior intelligence resources, should have been more than fully prepared to counter the move. He knew that in May, 1942, while Timoshenko had begun his offensive against Kharkov, a similar German stroke had been initiated against the Russian left flank from Izyum-Barvenkovo. Here it succeeded in paralysing the Russian offensive. But at Kotelnikovo, in December of that year, a like German thrust, after some initial success, had failed—possibly owing to lack of reserves and resources. Next, at Kharkov again, in the spring of 1943, von Manstein had by a similar onslaught saved the German troops in the Donetz basin ; it brought the whole Russian move towards the Dnieper to a complete halt, whilst the Germans recaptured Kharkov. On the other hand, somewhat analogous tactics in July, 1943, in the Kursk-Byelgorod battles had led to failure and to colossal losses. The "strategy of the buffalo" is too rigid ; it was also out of date, for the Russians had learned too much.

Attacking northwards at various alternative points between November 12 and 19 along a front which extended from Brusilov to Zhitomir—and finally Korosten—von Manstein made repeated attempts during one whole week to smash the Russian advance. On November 19 the Russians admitted the loss of Zhitomir, which had never been very strongly held, and gave ground at other points. But the Germans were never able to reach the key point of Korostychev. The German radio commentators, already on November 14, had begun to attribute their lack of rapid success to the treachery of the weather ; and also—with more truth perhaps—to the drain on their resources caused by the existence of the Balkan and Italian fronts.

Still von Manstein's blows were far from spent. He tried to alter the point of impact. On November 30 a strong attack carried out by the élite of the *Waffen S.S.*

divisions drove the Russians out of Korosten. Once more, as before, the Germans could do no more. But they would not desist from further attacks, and on December 7 and 8 to the south-east of their "wedge" the Russians had to admit some further withdrawals. They then stated that von Manstein was still attacking with between 1200 and 1700 tanks in massive strokes against their defence between Malin and Cheruyakov, also in the Fastov area. On December 10 they stated that the enemy was being held. But on the 14th they announced the abandonment of Radomysl (20 miles south of Malin). After that they gradually regained the initiative and resumed strong counter-attacks. These engagements seemed to be the last of which the German troops were then capable. So this crucial battle dragged to its end. For over one month Vatutin's advance had been definitely checked, though at heavy cost to the Germans. If the respite they had thus gained might be worth the price that they had paid time alone could show. It is at least certain that the depreciation suffered by the best troops that the Germans still possessed in the south would be very difficult to make good.

Doubtless von Manstein's primary and ostensible objective had been to roll back the Russian forward drive from Kiev. Yet it concealed a far deeper strategic significance. This was no less than the restoration of free communication between the northern and southern halves of the whole German front which had been severed by the Russian move into the area of the Pripet marshes. This hold had greatly complicated the movements of German reserves. Hence von Manstein's desperate efforts to regain control of the railway line that ran through Zhitomir-Korosten-Ovruch. He was able to recapture Zhitomir and Korosten, but he was never within measurable distance of retaking Ovruch. Northwards from Ovruch the Russians stayed in unmolested possession of that important line; and so the German front remained split in two.

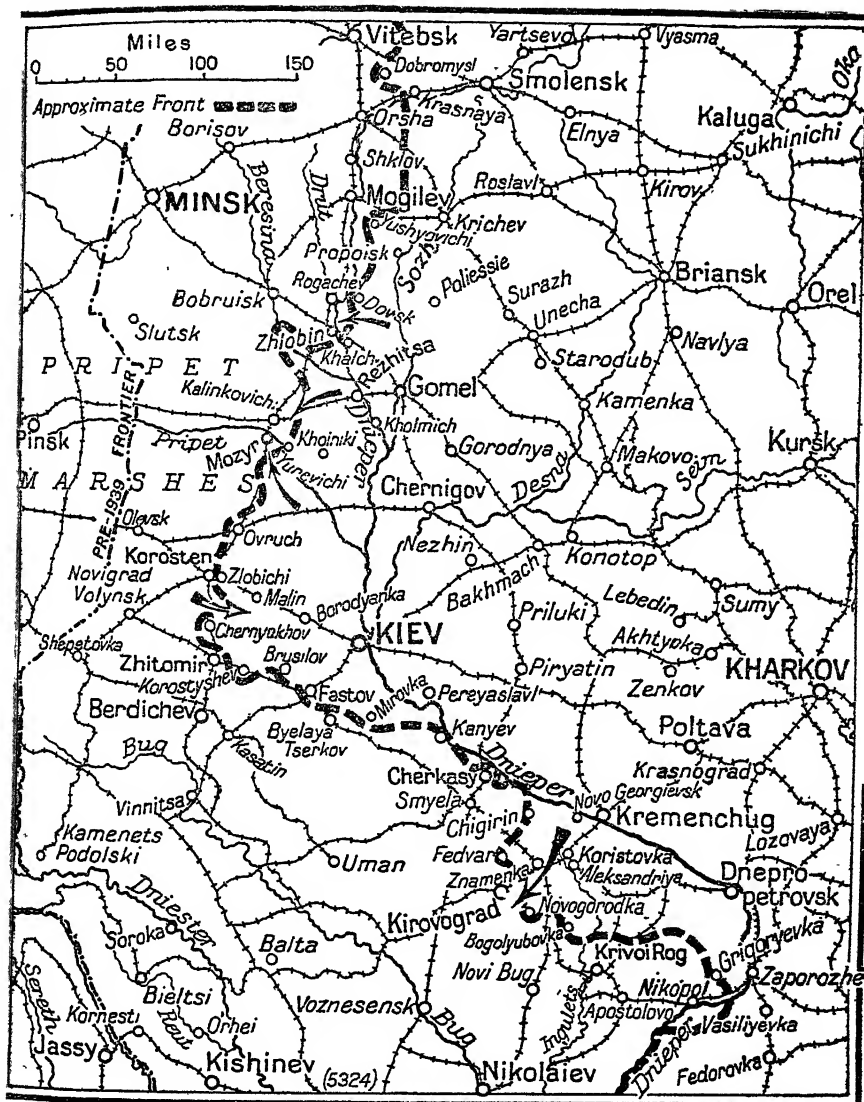
In spite, therefore, of the lesser German successes, the Russians may thus be said to have remained masters of



the situation. Their northern flank was safe: von Manstein could never be reinforced or assisted from that side. Nay, more, during the whole battle they were able to continue their attacks based on the region of the confluence of the Dnieper and Pripet, where some days' heavy fighting took place.

To the south-west of Rechitza-Cossack cavalry advanced along the valley of the River Beresina. On the 25th Propoisk was taken. Next morning the movement continued on a 100-mile front between Rechitza and a point north of Propoisk. North of Gomel the Russians broke through while they secured Gomel itself: the Germans admitted the evacuation of this stronghold, "after its total destruction." Russian progress was maintained in this area until on December 5 they had advanced to the east of Rogachev and stood within artillery range of Zhlobin, a formidable German stronghold which it was anticipated would be held with the utmost determination. On the other hand, the attempted Russian landings at Kerch destined to clear the Crimea of the enemy had failed completely, although there were signs that the Russians might repeat their attack.

To return to the battle within the Dnieper Bend itself. This, the third phase of the battle, is not easy to depict, since accurate or detailed information is sadly lacking. The operations were, in fact, relegated into insignificance by the events taking place in the Kiev Bulge. During the latter part of November the Russians continued on the offensive in the vicinity of Cherkassy and south-west of Kremenchug; but not until December 6 could really serious pressure be brought to bear on the Germans. On December 1 heavy fighting had taken place near Apostolovo, also at Znamenska and Smyela, these all being centres of communication essential to the German troops remaining in the Bend. Then on the 6th, as the Russians were nearing Znamenska, the Germans announced a withdrawal to their "main defence line." Although, as already stated, the battles round the Russian salient west of Kiev did not really terminate until mid-December, the possible issue of that fighting could at that time no



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longer retard the task of clearing the Germans from the whole Bend. So the Russians went on rolling up the enemy's forces along the southern right bank of the river to the south of Cherkassy and south-west of Kremenchug. The town of Cherkassy was strongly held and did not fall until December 14. The struggle for the town had then lasted for no less than five weeks. By this time Znamenska junction had been captured so that on the 15th the Russian forces were able to link up and then advance on Kirovograd. Heavy air attacks were made upon the railways that were congested with German traffic attempting to leave the Bend. The Germans, fully alive to their imminent danger, now made strong counter-attacks from Kirovograd, where they had been temporarily much strengthened by air forces temporarily withdrawn from the defence of their home territory. By December 18 the Russians could announce slight progress towards Kirovograd. Two days later they claimed also to have advanced to the Dnieper mouth and to have destroyed the last German bridgehead in the region of Kherson. During the following days until the end of the year nothing much was heard from the interior of the Bend, although slight progress was stated to have been made to the west of Zaporozhe and in the direction of Nikopol.¹

The worst enemy that the Red Army encountered in this whole southern region was the mud that at times covered the country as the result of a mild and fickle winter.

At Znamenska the Germans had posted large mobile forces—tank formations reinforced by motorized infantry regiments and a large quantity of self-propelled artillery. These all found themselves nailed to the spot by the Ukrainian mud. Yet the bad state of the roads was a like disadvantage for the Red Army. But the Soviet Command had pinned its faith to the hardihood, endurance and indefatigability of the Soviet infantryman, on the skill of the Soviet driver, and on the superiority of Soviet material, better adapted as it was than the German for use on bad roads. That faith was justified. In this most difficult offensive all arms displayed exemplary staunchness, endurance and tirelessness. One night, in perfect silence, the

¹ It is worth noting that at this time Tolbukhin's Fourth Ukrainian Army Group seems to fade away. This might conceivably be ascribed to an insufficiency of "intermediate" and "winter" divisions to set up this Army Group afresh. In any case the necessity of this Group would now be disappearing as the Bend was being regained.

artillerymen man-handled their guns over six miles along the front over oozy, deep mud, carrying ammunition in canvas bags on their backs. Then the tankmen poured into the breach made by the artillery, and carried the offensive into the depth of the enemy defences. On their tanks they carried logs, reed mats, bundles of brush-wood. Where the going was particularly bad the crews, aided by the Tommy-guns riding on the armour, laid roads for their machines through almost impassable stretches of bog.

The infantry made real "Suvorov" marches behind the tanks, consolidating the territory captured by the armoured forces. It was sheer military toughness, acquired during two years of war, that enabled the Soviet troops to maintain the speed of their offensive and their elastic manoeuvring capacity, despite the terribly muddy terrain.¹

A somewhat analogous lack of information is felt regarding the operations on the Northern Front from the Pripet area northwards during these weeks. On December 19 the Russians claimed to have begun an offensive movement some days earlier south of Nevel; this had already been confirmed by German statements. In five days the Red Army had broken through on a 50-mile front and advanced 20 miles. On the 23rd they reached Gorodok, which the Germans defended with desperation even in the very streets. Heading for Polotsk by Christmas Day, the Russians had cut the Polotsk-Vitebsk road and rail communications. By the end of the year they were astride the road leading to Orsha. Vitebsk, said to be the most strongly fortified German base in Russia, was now isolated but for the road running back to Minsk. Further south indecisive actions appear to have been fought in the valley of the Beresina, where German efforts to drive back the Red troops failed, a like fate which overtook Russian attempts to make headway in that area.

Throughout the autumn the Russians had been in a far better position for conducting offensive war, particularly in the south. Since the beginning of July, the Red Army had captured several important railway trunk lines connecting the centre of the country with the south and had thereby substantially improved the operational-tactical possibilities of the further course of the struggle in its favour. Conversely with the loss of these strategic communications, the German Army had to a large extent been

¹ *Soviet War News*, October 13, 1943.

deprived of the favourable conditions for the manoeuvre of its troops and its operational-tactical possibilities had declined. In addition there had been liberated from the Germans the seaports of Anapa, Taman, Taganrog, Mariupol, Osipenko (Berdyansk) and also Novorossisk, the second naval base of the Black Sea Fleet.

Further, the Russians had during the course of the war made great strides in the sphere of tactics. This was particularly the case with their artillery, which had been reorganized and largely rearmed. This process rendered possible the introduction of an entirely new system for the command of this arm and its use in battle. Taking advantage of the new and complete mechanization of all types of batteries, the Russians had formed what was in fact no less than an army of artillery, sub-divided and commanded as divisions and even corps. By such means they had succeeded in establishing a control over their guns which enabled them to obtain highly effective creeping barrages and other concentrations of fire of a new type and on an altogether unprecedented scale.

All these weighty advantages were beginning to tell heavily in their favour.

Nevertheless it was clear that, if the Russian High Command desired to drive its armies still further west, they must study very closely the supply system available to support any such movement. Hitherto, so it is believed, Moscow had served as the ultimate supply base for all fronts. The resulting distances of haulage of military material had never imposed a journey of more than 400-650 miles on the supply trains, because since 1942 the maximum radius of the Russian operations with Moscow as a centre had swung, roughly speaking, of course, along a fairly constant arc from Stalingrad to Kiev. Elsewhere distances to the front would have been less. The tasks of administration and supply of the Russian armies, more especially during the great summer offensive of 1943, can justly be regarded as a military achievement of a very high order, particularly if it be taken into account that a huge volume of this war

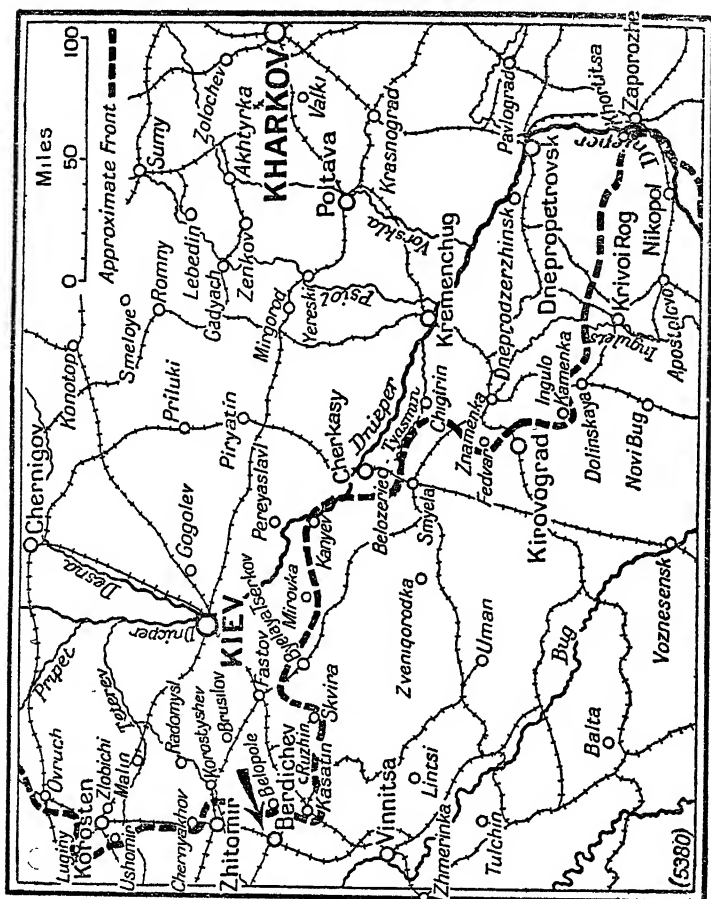
material was being hauled all the way west from the new industrial areas in the Urals. Russian railways, if few and far between, were adapted and accustomed to long haulage. Moreover, it is readily overlooked that Russian railwaymen had, even in the old unregenerate days, transported and supplied a very large army in Manchuria in 1904-05 at the end of a double track line over 3,500 miles in length. This had been no mean feat.

There is reason to believe, then, that as soon as Kiev had been taken on November 6 the Russian High Command must have set about organizing for a further advance westward a new advanced base in the recaptured city which, though all but destroyed, must still remain a traffic centre of the first rank. In six or seven weeks much could be done ; and it undoubtedly was done.

Having regard to these various facts, the Russian High Command, as soon as it was felt that von Manstein's counter-attacks were definitely exhausted, ordered Vatutin with his First Ukrainian Army Group to undertake a new westward advance. For this task the Russian High Command must have called upon the "winter" army to relieve the hard-pressed troops that had withstood von Manstein's furious assaults. The great movement, so momentous in its results, was set in motion on December 24.

The course of events was the following. By the 27th Vatutin had advanced some 25 miles along a 50-mile front. They had taken Radomysl on the 25th ; Brusilov on the 26th, and they also held a stretch of the Zhitomir-Fastov railway, as well as another stretch of the line Fastov-Kasatin. By December 28 they had crossed the River Teterev, captured Korostychev (15 miles east of Zhitomir), as well as Zlobichi (just south-east of Korosten). Vatutin now stood well beyond the limit of his advance in October and was threatening Berdichev. On the 29th the Red Army entered Korosten and Cheryakov ; on the next day the Russians were in Kasatin. On the 31st the Germans had evacuated Zhitomir and were in full retreat, abandoning material and stores. The Russians were clearly in full pursuit of a badly defeated enemy.

The loss of Zhitomir was admitted by the Germans on January 1, when they announced that the Russians had employed between thirty and thirty-five divisions (*sic*) in



DECEMBER 30, 1943

their attack on the place ; also that they now had at least 1,000,000 men in their Kiev salient. On other fronts, so they claimed, the thaw was limiting all movement, and to that cause they attributed all their failures. That may be true or otherwise, yet the Russians were still

able to surmount that same difficulty. The conditions of the terrain over which this remarkable advance was conducted grew execrable. At first there was much frost which grievously hampered artillery and tanks; then there was some thaw—and mud. Moreover, the Russians encountered serious obstacles in the shape of small towns and villages, all of which had been cleverly prepared for defence. Bitter fighting would take place at their entrances. Many rivers, both large and small, cut across the country, and as these were not yet ice-bound owing to the mildness of the winter, they grievously hampered the mechanized troops. The roads were in a very bad state indeed. But the Red Army pressed on everywhere until their front of advance resembled a species of zig-zag stretching over some hundreds of miles. As fast as the Germans strengthened one sector at the expense of another, there the Russian tanks would come crashing through the weakened spot. These tanks were thus constantly outflanking the enemy's centres of resistance with terrific effect.

The ease with which the Russian drive was continued until the close of the year speaks for itself. It may well be epitomized in the words of Stalin's Order of the Day for December 30 :

"Having launched an offensive in the Zhitomir direction, troops of the 1st Ukrainian Front pierced the German defences, and in six days of stiff fighting, by the close of the day of December 29 had advanced from 30 to 60 miles, widening their break-through to 180 miles along the front.

In the course of the offensive our troops routed eight German tank divisions, including the S.S. Tank Divisions 'Adolf Hitler' and 'Reich' and 14 infantry divisions. As a result of the successful offensive, troops of the front captured the town and large railway junctions of Korosten . . . Kasatin . . . and more than 1,000 other populated places."

A reference to Russian progress in the air cannot be omitted from this review since it forms a still more remarkable illustration of Russian progress during 1943.

In 1941 the Russian Air Force had been hopelessly outclassed by that of Germany. By the close of that year it had lost over 10 000 machines. Then, as soon as he had realized the technical inferiority of the Russian aircraft, Stalin, with astounding perspicacity and resolution, gave

instructions for the creation of a *second but wholly new* Air Force which should take the place of its predecessor as soon as it might be in a state to do so. This change is believed to have materialized behind the fighting front, and although a certain number of new aircraft types had necessarily to be taken into service, it was not until 1943 that the new Russian air forces came into action. This change may well be one of the main reasons for the sudden predominance of the Russians in the air during the past summer and autumn campaigns ; although the disparity was largely brought about, if not originated, by the important deflection of German air power to home defence as the result of the Allied attacks on Germany itself.

It is now estimated that on the Eastern Front Germany can be maintaining scarcely 500 first-line fighter aircraft. Consequently, by the close of the year the Russians might be said to have enjoyed the priceless advantage of an air superiority which enabled them to embark on operations which might have proved most hazardous if not impracticable in earlier days. The whole position was made yet more clear when Stalin at the Teheran Conference stated that Russian aircraft production had reached the large figure of 3,000 machines per month.

In addition, the British and U.S.A. deliveries, which have run into thousands during the past two years, had played a great part in covering Russian air needs during this critical period. The "Bell Aerocobra" fighter and "Douglas 20A" from U.S.A. ; British "Havoc" bombers and "Spitfire" fighters have been well in evidence along the entire Russian front. In order to learn the management of these foreign machines a special training centre had been inaugurated where some thousands of Russian pilots were trained in the use of the Allied machines.

The new Russian aircraft now in service comprised three leading types :

(a) The "Lavochkin" fighter (La5) powered with a 1,500 h.p. air-cooled engine. It is the smallest in size of any fighter aircraft now in constant use on any front. Its speed is 375 m.p.h.

(b) The improved "Stormovik," fighter-bomber, dive-bomber and general purpose aircraft. This is now known as JLIH, and 1,200 of these are now being turned out monthly.

(c) The long distance bomber, "Petlyakov 8" (Pe8).

The Russians, now at the close of 1943, stand in a different situation to what was the case in 1941 and 1942. Air superiority is now becoming real; moreover, its importance is better understood. If a general concentric air attack against Germany is initiated in 1944, it may well be found that the Russian share in the aerial sphere may be of major importance.¹

So ended the momentous year 1943. Like both preceding war years it had concluded with a Russian triumph that boded well for the final and definite success of Russian arms.

The close of 1941 had witnessed the recovery by the Russians of the city of Rostov, after a battle where Timoshenko had so patiently striven to lay a trap for the headlong German thrust to the East. Here at Rostov was the first occasion in the whole war on which the redoubtable *Wehrmacht* had been fairly and squarely defeated in the field. The flight of von Kleist's broken *panzers* from Rostov had set up a goal which the Russian armies could now fight to attain. It was literally a great turning-point. Yet not until the very end of 1942 could the Russians realize their ambition. Then at Kotelnikovo in December of that year came that fiercely contested struggle which proved the prelude to the destruction of the German Sixth Army before Stalingrad. That event altered the entire complexion of the war. Finally, with the close of 1943 there stands out Vatutin's amazing success south-west of Kiev. Following as it did on the outstanding failure of von Manstein's furious onslaughts, the rapidity with which the Russians gained their great victory proves the exhaustion of the German troops occasioned by the efforts they had made to break the Russian armies over a spell of at least five weeks.

General Dittmar's reflections broadcast on the German radio on January 4 in his summary of the year's fighting are worthy of mention, not only as indicating a profound change in the German outlook, but because they are not

¹ For this whole question see the *Weltwoche* of Zurich for December 17, 1943, whence this information has been collected.

an unfair summary of the fighting that had taken place during this last quarter.

"Let us not overlook that in face of this enemy many traditional standards of former times have lost their validity. Soviet military leadership has learned very much. To a considerable degree the Soviet Command has adopted our methods and principles. In some respects it has outstripped us and in every field where numbers are concerned by far surpassed us. To make this statement is due in fairness to the achievements of our fighting front. In our view this admission justifies that admiration of Soviet military skill which we hear expressed, more or less sincerely, in the camp of the Western Powers. A Power like the Soviets which can always count on superior numbers, a Power which can afford to dovetail all its plans and measures in the service of one single purpose and one single goal, can easily gain an ascendancy in the long run. But one thing seems certain: this ascendancy, this superior weight would have become crushing if it had not been German soldiers who time after time threw the strength of their hearts and of their unbroken spirits into the scales of decision.

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"In these days in which a new year has begun we cannot forget the wounds inflicted by the old year. We remember that a year ago we stood in Tunis and Tripolitania, on the Volga, Don and Kuban. The whole significant difference in the situation now and then is expressed—so it would seem—in these names which only a year ago marked the far-flung boundaries of our orbit. It is bitter to think of this, but there is no reason why we should think of those former conquests with our minds tormented by the idea that this forward sweep to the limits of the possible was perhaps nothing but a tragic error. No view could be more mistaken. True, we have not voluntarily gone back from the Don to the Dnieper and Pripet. In the East, as in the Mediterranean, we had to follow the hard law of necessity."

Yes: true indeed. Yet one may well ask why did the Germans ever reach those far-flung boundaries of their orbit? What does Dittmar mean by "a tragic error"? If so, on whose part?

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CHAPTER IV

THE WAR IN THE WEST

I : AT SEA

The King's Navy lost a distinguished officer and chief on October 4 when it was announced that Admiral of the Fleet Sir Dudley Pound had resigned his office as First Sea Lord owing to ill health. Admiral of the Fleet Sir Andrew Cunningham, who had commanded, first the Mediterranean Fleet and finally all the naval forces of the Allies in the Mediterranean, succeeded him as First Sea Lord and Chief of the Naval Staff. In a farewell message to the Fleet Sir Dudley Pound expressed his regret at having to give up the task of directing our naval operations, owing to a "sudden and unexpected illness," and thanked the Navy for its devotion to duty afloat and ashore, and said that in the darkest days of the last four years he had been sustained by

"the knowledge that in all circumstances the high traditions and the fighting spirit of the Royal Navy and the Merchant Navy would prevail. This confidence has been justified in all the actions at sea which have taken place. There has never been any failure or hesitation to engage the enemy more closely. The same spirit will inspire you in the hard fighting which lies ahead."

He commended his successor to the Navy in the following words: "Admiral of the Fleet Sir Andrew Cunningham succeeds me. He is a great sea officer and a fearless leader. I know you will give to him, as you have given to me, your support and confidence. To him and to you all I wish 'God speed' and good fortune."

On October 21 Admiral Pound died. That night the First Lord paid him the following tribute :

"We have been fortunate indeed to have had a First Sea Lord of the calibre of Sir Dudley Pound during the most critical period of the history of the Fleet. I pay my tribute of respect to a great sea captain and to one of the two greatest Englishmen I have known, and of admiration for a man of the greatest honesty and simplicity of character, who has borne malice to no one. . . ."

Tributes were also paid to the memory of this fine sailor by Admiral Ernest King, Commander-in-Chief United States Fleet, and by Admiral Harold Stark, Commanding U.S. Naval Forces in Europe. Admiral King

described him as "a great gentleman and a sterling officer whose views and counsel were of great weight in the deliberations of the combined staffs." Admiral Stark said: "... Not only had I come to regard him as a warm personal friend, but also as a great naval officer with the highest qualities of judgment and leadership. The United Nations will ever owe him a debt of gratitude for his vision and outstanding contribution to our naval effort throughout the world. Truly it might be said of Admiral Pound 'Well done.'"

No other Service Chief of Staff had held office continuously in wartime for so long a period. He was a fine seaman, a "master of every practical detail in his profession," and he had maintained the efficiency of the fleets he had commanded at the highest pitch. He had immense common-sense and abundant character.

His critics had suggested that he "allowed himself too often to be over-ruled in professional matters, or strategical, by the Prime Minister or the War Cabinet; but when the full history of the direction of the war comes to be written, it is more likely to be found that when he had made up his mind on any point, he nearly always carried it, whatever the opposition. . . ."¹

The change in command made no difference to the policy of the Admiralty. As before, every possible effort was made to defeat the submarine attack on our communications. Furthermore, the steady addition of new units to the Navy and the elimination of Italy made it possible to reinforce our squadrons in the Indian Ocean with more capital ships and to strengthen our protection of the Russia-bound British and Allied convoys in Arctic waters. The events of the quarter in the northern seas and the culminating destruction of the *Scharnhorst* gave the impression that our offensive and defensive strength there had grown greatly during the last months of the year. That of the Germans had certainly declined. It was doubtful whether the *Tirpitz* could be made fit for sea service after being torpedoed by our midget submarines on September 22 until she had returned to a fully equipped shipyard. The *Prinz Eugen* had been torpedoed and was still under repair. The pocket battleships *Lutzow* and *Admiral Scheer* had been transferred to the Baltic. The *Gneisenau*, the *Scharnhorst's* sister, had been lying for more than fifteen months at Gdynia when

¹ *The Times*, October 22,

the quarter under review began, and it was not expected that her repairs, which had involved the removal of her three great three-gun turrets, would be completed until the spring of 1944, if then. With the sinking of the *Scharnhorst* the enemy's power for mischief in the far north was greatly reduced.

Before referring to the campaign against the U-boats, a word must be said of the improvement in the Atlantic situation brought about by the agreement of the Portuguese Government to grant Britain facilities in the Azores which would enable better protection to be given to merchant shipping in the Atlantic. These islands lie almost on the direct course from the British islands to the West Indies and the Panama Canal. The Naval Correspondent of *The Times* (*loc. cit.*, October 13) wrote thus of them :

.... They are no more than 1,200 miles from Newfoundland. They are of volcanic origin and therefore for the most part precipitous and cliff-bound. There are, however, two fairly commodious harbours, at Horta, in the island of Fayal, and at Ponta Delgada in Sao Miguel. Both harbours can give effective shelter to supply ships and escort craft, and there are facilities for minor repairs. An airfield is understood to have been recently completed at Horta, and though the islands are mountainous on the whole, it is possible that modern methods of airfield preparation, which have been greatly developed during the war, may be capable of multiplying them. . . . Horta and Ponta Delgada have long been flying-boat bases.

The Prime Minister stated yesterday that the facilities to be granted to the Allies in the Azores "will enable better protection to be provided for merchant shipping in the Atlantic." That . . . presumably indicated that they will be used as fuelling and operating bases for the escort forces, both naval and air, of Allied convoys. Their use as such will enable full-scale escorts to be provided over a much greater area of the North Atlantic than has hitherto been possible without going far to the north towards Iceland and Greenland—which should be a great advantage in winter. It will be of particular advantage to traffic bound from the United Kingdom either to the South Atlantic or the Mediterranean and *vice versa*, filling a gap which can have been covered hitherto only with difficulty.¹

On October 19 a "hand-out" by the Admiralty through the Ministry of Information mentioned the recent sinking of a U-boat in the Bay of Biscay by two Sunderland flying-boats. The announcement said that German submarines were in the habit of crossing the

¹ The circumstances in which this concession was made by the Portuguese Government and international comment thereon are chronicled in Chapter I, Section 1 of this volume.

Bay on the surface, where they could make better speed than submerged, and if attacked they would fight it out with their guns. They were often escorted by Ju88s. In this action described three powerful German destroyers were within a dozen miles when the Sunderlands first killed several of the U-boat's crew with their machine-guns and then dropped depth-charges around her, inflicting such damage that most of her crew abandoned her and she eventually blew up. The adoption by R.A.F. Coastal Command of a powerful searchlight, known as the "Leigh light" from Wing Commander H. de V. Leigh who carried out the initial tests, had greatly increased the difficulties of the U-boat. Until last winter, when the Leigh light was first introduced, they usually had been able to remain surfaced while recharging their batteries by night. Now they were liable to attack by night as much as by day.

Although Edgar Schröder, the naval expert of the German News Agency said at the beginning of November "we have now got the sand out of our gigantic U-boat machine," the joint statement on U-boat warfare in October which was issued under the authority of President Roosevelt and Mr. Churchill on November 9 could not have encouraged any German who may have heard it broadcast. It said :

"During the months of August, September and October approximately 60 U-boats were destroyed. This brings to more than 150 the number of U-boats destroyed during the last six months. The record of the last three months is particularly gratifying, because during most of this period fewer U-boats were operating. Fewer targets were presented for our air and sea forces.

"During August, September and October more U-boats were destroyed than Allied merchant ships were sunk by U-boat action. The ratio of U-boat to merchant ship attrition during October was more satisfactory than in any previous month. Our tonnage losses from all causes in October were the second lowest of any month of the war. Merchant ship tonnage lost to U-boat action during the last three months was less than one-half the merchant ship tonnage lost during the previous three months, despite the fact that actual shipping increased.

"The Germans have introduced new U-boat weapons and tactics. Thus far we have been able to cope successfully with the changing situation. The battle continues in full vigour."

On November 9 Mr. Alexander, First Lord of the Admiralty, after receiving the freedom of his native

town of Weston-super-Mare, made a speech in which he said that a fellow man of Somerset, Captain C. P. Clarke, had been the leading figure in the anti-U-boat campaign. Captain Clarke, he said,

"has for two years been my Director of Operations against the enemy U-boats, with an important share in the great success which we have hewn out of the massive danger which confronted us." He wished this officer every success in the command of a "great ship" which he was soon to take to sea. He added that he was convinced that we should hold our own against the U-boat provided that the flow of escort ships, aircraft and merchant vessels continued at a steady rate and was not prejudiced by premature optimism.

On December 5 the Air Ministry described operations extending over eight days in the Atlantic in the course of which British and American aircraft had destroyed at least six U-boats in the Atlantic. The statement showed that no less than 15 U-boats, belonging to two "packs" which had attempted to attack three convoys, had been attacked by Allied aircraft.

In the first attack two convoys were being escorted by aircraft from Iceland and three U-boats were attacked by the air escort. Next day Liberators provided close cover for the convoy, while U.S. Hudsons and Venturas flew offensive sweeps. After an attack on a U-boat by a Hudson, the results of which were not determined, a U.S. Ventura sighted a U-boat, and sank it with depth charges. About 30 survivors were left in the water. Two hours later another U-boat was similarly sunk by a Liberator and some 20 of her crew were left in the water. Another Liberator, whose commander had signalled that he was attacking a U-boat, was seen no more "and its crew are missing." Early on the third day a third U-boat was certainly destroyed by a Hudson. Later "the third convoy was threatened by a concentration of U-boats," and on the sixth day a Liberator attacked and eventually sank a U-boat near the convoy. A fifth U-boat was sunk after several attacks by Liberators. She left 15 to 20 survivors in their dinghies. The last to be sunk fell to a Sunderland of R.C.A.F. squadron of Coastal Command on the sixth day. Fifteen survivors were seen. The Coastal Command aircraft engaged in these operations were commanded by Wing Commander R. M. Longmore, who was commander of the Liberator lost in these operations.

This success was entirely the work of aircraft. The next, recorded by the Admiralty and the Air Ministry in a joint announcement on December 11, was a combined operation. It was the defeat of a strong concentration of U-boats which had gathered in the North Atlantic to attack merchant shipping. The engagements were fought over a wide area and the vigorous offensive action of our ships and Coastal Command aircraft, aided by an

American naval air squadron, prevented the enemy from launching an attack on the two convoys which were his objective.

The first evening of the fighting saw contact made with the enemy. About 20 were estimated to be about 60 miles from the two convoys. During the ensuing night the destroyers *Duncan* (Commander P. W. Gretton) and *Vanquisher* (Lieut.-Commander O. A. Ormsby) made several attacks with depth-charges during the night, thus "harassing and disrupting" the enemy's force. After dawn a Coastal Command Liberator sighted a U-boat on the surface about 15 miles from one of the convoys, and attacked it. The U-boat's A.A. fire so severely damaged the Liberator that its depth-charges could not be released, but Flight Lieut. E. A. Bland, her captain, reported the U-boat's position to our ships and circled near the U-boat until forced to descend on the sea, thus guiding another Liberator to the area. The second aircraft, though damaged by A.A. fire, also dropped two depth-charges near the U-boat which submerged in a damaged condition and was no more seen.

Meanwhile surface ships had been detached from the escort of a convoy to the northward and came up at full speed. H.M. corvette *Pink* (Lieut. R. Atkinson) picked up the airmen from the water while H.M.S. *Duncan* attacked the U-boat with depth-charges, and was believed to have done her more damage. Later in the day a Liberator sighted a U-boat astern of a convoy, and after being once repulsed, succeeded in mortally injuring the enemy. She sank in half an hour, leaving survivors clinging to rubber floats, a number of whom were picked up by H.M.S. *Duncan*. During this encounter three Liberators from Iceland engaged another U-boat which had been sighted some distance to the northward of the convoys. For nearly half an hour the aircraft attacked in turn until the U-boat reared her bows high out of the sea and slid under the surface, leaving 15 men in the water. During the second night the remaining U-boats attempted to close the convoys in strength. A series of intermittent actions followed until dawn. In these the destroyers *Duncan* and *Vidette* (Lieut.-Commander R. Hart) and the frigates *Berry* (Lieut.-Commander C. S. Pirie), *Drury* (Lieut. N. J. Parker), *Bazely* (Lieut.-Commander J. V. Brock), and *Bentinck* (Commander E. H. Chavasse), were engaged.

During the next day "a strong force of land-based aircraft, composed of Liberators, Hudsons and U.S. Navy Venturas, together with Sunderland flying-boats, provided air cover for the convoys or carried out wide anti-submarine sweeps around them." Early in the afternoon two U-boats were sighted on the surface by an R.C.A.F. Sunderland of Coastal Command captained by Flight Lieut. P. T. Sargent. He attacked one. Rapid fire from both submarines killed three of the crew and almost crippled the Sunderland, but her captain pressed his attack home and severely damaged the enemy ship. "The Sunderland was then forced to descend on the sea, but broke up on impact and its captain went down with his aircraft. The survivors were later picked up by H.M.S. *Drury*." Great courage and devotion to duty were displayed by the officers and crew of the lost Sunderland, and her mortally wounded navigator, Flying Officer C. B. Steeves, refused to lie down and passed to his colleagues the position of the attack and their course to the nearest convoy. He died a few minutes later. Three more attacks were made by aircraft on U-boats during the day and in the evening one was straddled by depth charges and broke in two, leaving many men in the water,

At about the same time the frigate H.M.S. *Byrd* (Lieut.-Commander L. H. Phillips) attacked a U-boat which had apparently been blown to the surface by depth-charges and appeared three cable-lengths from her. Firing every gun that would bear, the frigate speedily put the enemy out of action. Many of her crew were killed and 27 survivors were made prisoners after she had sunk. Shortly afterwards yet another U-boat was blown to the surface. H.M. corvette *Sunflower* (Lieut.-Commander J. Plomer) made a second attack with depth-charges and is believed to have destroyed her. After this the enemy made no further attack and both convoys went on their way without interference. Altogether five U-boats were destroyed in these engagements and three damaged against our two aircraft destroyed and three damaged. According to the Admiralty "more than 99 per cent of the total number of escorted ships reached harbour in safety," a curious phrase suggesting that these ships numbered over a hundred and that only one was torpedoed.

On December 9 a statement was issued under the authority of President Roosevelt and Mr. Churchill on the progress of the anti-submarine campaign. It ran :

"Anti-U-boat operations in November have been notable for the little the enemy has achieved for the great effort he has exerted. The number of merchant vessels sunk by U-boats in November is smaller than in any other month since May, 1940. By means of aircraft operating from the Azores, we have been able to improve the protection to our convoys and to diminish the area in which enemy U-boats were free from attack by our forces. The enemy has used long-range aircraft to assist in concentrating U-boats on our convoy routes. In spite of this our escort and counter-attacks have been effective. The caution of enemy U-boats has lessened the number of opportunities given to our forces. . . . Nevertheless the number of U-boats sunk in November has again exceeded the number of their victims."

On December 17 the Admiralty recorded another U-boat attempt on two west-bound convoys which was beaten off by naval surface craft and aircraft of Coastal Command with the loss of two submarines. On January 8, 1944, the Admiralty published an account of another action fought some weeks previously between German submarines and a force of British sloops commanded by Captain F. J. Walker in H.M.S. *Starling*. The account told how

"The first U-boat was encountered at night in a position north-west of the Azores and was illuminated by star-shells fired by H.M.S. *Kite* (Lieut.-Commander W. F. Segrave). The enemy . . . a large patrol U-boat or supply U-boat, submerged 700 yards ahead of the sloop which carried out three attacks with depth-charges. . . . Other vessels soon joined the *Kite*, and the *Starling* made contact with the U-boat, closely attended by H.M.S. *Kite* and *Woodcock* (Lieut.-Commander C. Gwinner). As the night was very dark the attack was postponed until dawn, but the U-boat's attempt to elude the sloops by proceeding very slowly on a south-westerly

course failed, and next day she was destroyed by H.M.S. *Woodcock*. During the afternoon a second U-boat was detected by H.M.S. *Wild Swan*, and this sloop and H.M.S. *Starling* attacked it with depth-charges. Heavy underwater explosions and the appearance of great quantities of oil with German foodstuffs and clothing on the surface gave proof of the destruction of the submarine."

Excellent work was done in the Bay of Biscay by the Canadian destroyers *Iroquois* and *Athabaskan*, and the corvettes *Calgary*, *Edmundston* and *Snowberry*, working in concert with aircraft, chiefly Wellington bombers of Coastal Command. The combination of fire from surface ships with bombing attack was more effective than bombing attack by unsupported aircraft. On one day three U-boats were destroyed by as many Wellingtons which were themselves lost with only one survivor, whom H.M.C.S. *Athabaskan* picked up with five Germans from one of their victims. The A.A. fire of the new U-boats was remarkably deadly on occasion.

In spite of these successes the Allies suffered several losses of naval vessels in the Atlantic during the operations of the quarter. Among the warships lost was the U.S. destroyer *Borie*, which had rammed and destroyed a U-boat but sustained injuries in so doing from which she sank. Her loss was recorded on November 10. The Polish destroyer *Orkan*, a ship with a fine record, was reported lost in October, and on December 3 the Admiralty announced the loss of H.M. destroyer *Haworth* (Commander R. H. Wright). Several aircraft were lost and there is reason to believe that the experiment of using helicopters against U-boats had to be abandoned when the enemy strengthened the A.A. armament of his submarines. The helicopter's power to hang over the target might give its bombs greater precision but it certainly gave the A.A. gunner in the U-boat an all-too-easy mark.

On January 10, 1944, the following joint statement regarding U-boat warfare in December was issued under the authority of President Roosevelt and Mr. Churchill :

"Total merchant ship tonnage lost by U-boat action in December was again low despite an extension of operating areas. Fewer U-boats were destroyed during the month by our air and sea forces owing to several factors, including increased caution by the enemy. Our supply routes were, however, well secured against U-boat attack.

"In 1943 U-boats sank but 40 per cent of the merchant ship tonnage that they sank in 1942. On the other hand, United Nations merchant ship tonnage constructed in 1943 approximately doubled the tonnage delivered in 1942. Nearly half of our tonnage lost for the year 1943 was during the first three months : 27 per cent was lost during the second quarter of 1943, and only 26 per cent was lost during the last six months."

There were several encounters between light vessels and flotillas in the narrow seas during the quarter, and casualties were sustained by both sides. On October 5 the Admiralty reported an engagement between light forces of the Royal Navy led by Commander C. B. Alers-Hankey and destroyers of the "Elbing" class near the Sept Iles off the north-west coast of France. Two of the German ships were set on fire, but they all escaped in the dark. We had few casualties. On October 11 the destruction of two German aeroplanes near the East Coast by light naval craft was announced. On October 23, however, we suffered something of a setback, which was the subject of the following statement :

"The Board of Admiralty regret to announce that during an action against enemy light naval forces in the English Channel last Saturday (i.e. October 23) the cruiser *Charybdis* (Captain G. A. Voelcker) was sunk, and the destroyer *Limbourne* (Acting Commander W. J. Phipps) was damaged and had to be sunk later by our own forces. . . .

"H.M.S. *Charybdis* and H.M.S. *Limbourne* were part of a force engaged in an offensive sweep off the French coast between Ushant and the Channel Isles. Visibility was poor when the enemy force was encountered and in the ensuing action H.M.S. *Charybdis* and H.M.S. *Limbourne* were hit by torpedoes."

The captain of the *Charybdis* was missing. Some of her crew were picked up by the enemy and landed in Brittany. A number of dead were cast up on the Channel Isles and were buried with the usual honours by the enemy.

On the night of October 24-25 there were sharp actions off the East Anglian coast between British destroyers escorting a convoy and about 30 E-boats. These were prevented from attacking the convoy by the destroyers and four were sunk. Others were damaged. The destroyers mentioned in the Admiralty report were H.M.S. *Pytchley* (Lieut.-Commander R. H. Hodgkinson), H.M.S. *Worcester* (Lieut. J. A. Hamer) and H.M.S. *Mackay* (Lieut.-Commander J. H. Eaden). Groups of M.G.B.s (i.e. motor-gunboats), commanded by Lieuts. P. N. Edge, F. R. Lightoller and C. A. Burk, were mentioned as having played an active part in the defeat of the E-boats, and one M.G.B., commanded by Lieut. R. M. Marshall, destroyed one by ramming. All our

ships returned safely. There were casualties in two motor-gunboats.

On November 4 the Admiralty reported an attack by E-boats on a British convoy in the Channel between Dungeness and Beachy Head on the night of November 3.

"During the early part of the action the destroyer, H.M.S. *Whitshed* (Lieut.-Commander T. P. Bailie-Grohman) scored three hits . . . on three of the enemy vessels. One E-boat was badly damaged if not sunk. Later light coastal forces, under the command of Lieut. R. N. McKeown, had a brief and inconclusive engagement with the enemy, who then withdrew in the darkness." No loss or damage was suffered by our ships.

Next came an attack by our light coastal forces on E-boats near the Hook of Holland also on the night of November 3. Two of the E-boats were damaged. Later our ships encountered a convoy "under close and outer escorts." The outer force was penetrated by H.M. ships which then engaged the inner group composed of large armed trawlers. One of these was believed to have been destroyed. Another was left unmanageable and a supply vessel was set on fire. "While disengaging H.M. ships encountered the convoy's outer escort of heavily armed minesweepers." One of our light craft was severely damaged and had to be sunk, after an attempt to tow her home had been abandoned.

Another convoy was attacked off Ijmuiden early on December 10. Our light coastal forces, commanded by Lieutenant I. C. Trelawney, pressed home their attack and left a supply ship sinking by the stern while her escort picked up survivors.

The German ships in Arctic waters were watched as closely as possible during the earlier part of the quarter, and it was known that the battle-cruiser *Scharnhorst*, which had taken part in the raid on Spitzbergen in September, was still in Alten Fjord. A statement by the Norwegian authorities issued on New Year's Eve confirmed that the raid was carried out by the *Tirpitz* and *Scharnhorst* with seven or eight destroyers. These last carried troops. The handful of Norwegian soldiers who formed the garrison fought their few guns until resistance became hopeless, and then retired inland, losing only a few killed and prisoners. The Germans were only seven hours ashore. The possibility remained, even after the disablement of the *Tirpitz* (cf. *The Sixteenth Quarter*, Chapter IV, Section 1) that the *Scharnhorst* might attack our Russia-bound convoys, and there were indications that the Admiralty and Air Ministry were exercising great vigilance in the northern seas.

There were several minor operations by surface ships or aircraft off the Norwegian coast during the earlier part of the period under review, and on the night of October 5 the Admiralty announced :

"The Home Fleet, under the command of Admiral Sir Bruce Fraser . . . carried out an operation against enemy shipping in the Norwegian leads,¹ in the Bodo area early on Monday, October 4. In the force were a number of United States ships including an aircraft-carrier. So far only preliminary reports have been received, but it is clear that the United States carrier-borne aircraft obtained hits with bombs on a number of large enemy merchant ships, including an 8,000 ton tanker. Three of these aircraft were shot down by anti-aircraft fire, and it is possible that some of their crews have been captured by the enemy. Later two enemy aircraft, one He115 and one Ju88 endeavoured to shadow the fleet and were shot down by fighters from the aircraft-carrier. No other enemy opposition was encountered."

There were other clashes in Norwegian waters, e.g. on October 19, when British and Norwegian light craft sank a small merchantman and damaged a patrol ship 70 miles north of Bergen, not without casualties ; and on October 31 when a British and a Norwegian ship, which had intercepted two coasters and sunk one, were themselves heavily attacked by hostile aircraft which damaged the British ship so badly that she had to be sunk. Her commanding officer and the ship's company were picked up by the Norwegian ship which returned undamaged. There were a few British casualties. One German aircraft was certainly shot down.

Late on December 26 the Admiralty announced that the *Scharnhorst* had been sunk by British warships off the Norwegian coast. Details of the action were issued by the Admiralty on December 28, but they afterwards proved to be incomplete in some particulars, and the writer has, therefore, had recourse to the statement given to Reuter's correspondent with the Home Fleet by its Commander-in-Chief, Admiral Sir Bruce Fraser, who directed the action which resulted in the destruction of the German battle-cruiser. He said :

"At 8 a.m. on December 26 the *Duke of York*, the Admiral's flagship, with H.M.S. *Jamaica*, and the destroyers *Savage*, *Saumarez* and *Scorpion* and the Norwegian destroyer *Stord*,² acting as an anti-submarine screen, were some way to the westward of the eventual scene of the battle, steering to the eastward. The weather during the previous night had been extremely bad, and the whole of the main action, which started in the late afternoon, was fought in the dark.

¹ "Norwegian leads" is a phrase describing the inner waterways of the numerous islands off the Norwegian coast.

² H.M. cruiser *Jamaica* was commanded by Captain J. Hughes-Hallett, and the three British destroyers by Commander M. D. Meyrick, Lieut.-Commander E. M. Walmsley, and Lieut.-Commander W. S. Clouston, respectively.

"Vice-Admiral Burnett, with a force of cruisers, was at this time to the southward of the Russia-bound convoy, which was in the latitude of Bear Island. He himself was in the *Belfast* (Captain F. R. Parham), with the *Norfolk* (Captain D. K. Bain) and the *Sheffield* in company. The convoy was escorted by destroyers and corvettes.

"About 9.30 a.m. Admiral Burnett sighted the *Scharnhorst* at long range, steering towards the convoy. Speed was increased to 27 knots and all three cruisers opened fire, the *Norfolk* obtaining a hit. The engagement lasted until about 10.50 a.m. when touch with the enemy was lost through her superior speed in the prevailing weather. She was last seen sheering off to the north-east, having been driven off from the convoy by the determined attack of Admiral Burnett and his cruisers. During this time my force was still many miles to the westward, proceeding at speed with the intention of getting between the *Scharnhorst* and her base at Alten Fjord.

"Admiral Burnett, who had been joined by the destroyers *Musketeer*, *Matchless*, *Opportune* and *Virago* from the convoy escort, now raced back to support the convoy in case the enemy should attempt another attack. . . ." The attack duly came and at 12.30 p.m. the enemy reappeared from the eastward making towards the convoy. The cruisers, who were stationed ahead of it, opened fire as did the *Scharnhorst*, "who obtained a hit on the *Norfolk*, killing one officer and six ratings and seriously wounding another six. The *Scharnhorst* now fled to the southward with the cruisers in close pursuit. The pursuit lasted all the afternoon. Admiral Burnett had fleeting glimpses of the enemy and was able to keep me informed of the enemy's movements. My force was coming up from the west and was to the south of Admiral Burnett. From his invaluable information I was able to decide the course on which to steer to intercept the *Scharnhorst* before she got too near her base.

"The stage was now set for the main action, the *Scharnhorst* being pursued by the cruiser force with dogged persistence, and the *Duke of York* making all speed to intercept her. . . . During this flight the enemy altered course slightly, which enabled me to engage a little earlier than I had expected." At 4.49 p.m. the *Duke of York*, "having turned . . . southward parallel to the *Scharnhorst*, illuminated her with starshell at a range of just under six miles." A minute later Admiral Fraser's flagship opened fire with a broadside of her 14-in. guns, followed by her 5.25-in. and the 6-in. of the *Jamaica*. The *Scharnhorst* fired starshell, and it was not until 5 p.m. that she opened with her 11-in. guns on the *Duke of York*.

"From then on until 6.24 the *Duke of York* and the *Scharnhorst* fired at each other continuously, the latter's tactics being to fire a broadside and then turn away so that her length was hidden and only the narrow width of her beam was presented as a target. With her superior speed, the *Scharnhorst* was gradually drawing out of effective range. Several hits had, by this time, been observed, and one obtained at 6.6 p.m. succeeded in inflicting damage which by 6.30 reduced her speed to 20 knots. Though the enemy fire was always accurate, and the ship was straddled time and again, the *Duke of York* only received two minor hits which penetrated the masts. The masterly and resolute handling of his ship by Captain Guy Russell, who commanded the *Duke of York*, can have been the only reason why she was not more seriously damaged.

"By 6.24 p.m. the range had opened unduly, and as the reduction in speed had not yet become apparent the *Duke of York* ceased firing—as fire could not be effective at such a distance—and the enemy did likewise. A few minutes later the *Scharnhorst* was seen to open fire again with all her armament at a much closer target. This proved to be the destroyers of

the *Duke of York's* screen, who had been creeping up on the *Scharnhorst*, waiting for a chance to get close enough to deliver a torpedo attack.

"The damage inflicted by the *Duke of York's* gunfire had by now made itself felt, and the *Scharnhorst* was slowing down to 20 knots. The destroyers had the opportunity and they seized it with both hands. About 6.45 p.m. the *Savage* and the *Saumarez* swept in on the starboard bow of the enemy, and the *Scorpion* and the *Stord* on the port bow, under a murderous fire from guns in the *Scharnhorst*. They pressed on indomitably, and the range was under one mile, when each in turn fired her torpedoes point-blank and turned away under smoke to make good her escape. Only the *Saumarez* was hit . . . one officer and ten ratings being killed and 11 ratings wounded. At the appropriate intervals at least three under-water explosions were clearly heard in the *Duke of York*."

The fate of the *Scharnhorst* was now sealed. The *Duke of York* had been gaining on her, but she was making fair speed and still firing at the destroyers, when at 7.1 p.m. the *Duke of York* opened fire with her 14-in. guns. The *Scharnhorst* was repeatedly hit by their huge shells. "Interior fires glowed, flashes of exploding ammunition were seen, and she started to circle, her speed gradually dropping, until at 7.28 she was almost stopped, steering to the north." Four minutes later the *Duke of York* ceased fire to allow the *Jamaica* to close in and finish the enemy off with torpedoes. "Other forces were, by this time, on the spot. Admiral Burnett in the *Belfast*, with the *Norfolk*, which had been engaging whenever they had an opportunity, now closed in from the north-west and the destroyers *Musketeer*, *Matchless*, *Opportune* and *Virago* arrived from the west, where they had been acting as a guard" should the *Scharnhorst* break back in that direction.

"Between 7.31 p.m. and 7.40 p.m. the *Belfast* and *Jamaica* attacked with torpedoes from one side and the destroyers from the other. Many hits were scored, and it is impossible to say at present what ship or ships . . . fired the final shot. It can only be said that somewhere between these times she sank in a position not far to the northward of the North Cape." It only remained to search for survivors of whom 36 were picked up by the *Matchless* and *Scorpion*. A great many of the *Scharnhorst's* 1,400 officers and men must have been killed in action and few indeed could have survived more than a few minutes in the icy Arctic.

So ended an action in which, to quote Admiral Fraser again, "the cruisers had, by their dogged pugnacity, given safe conduct to the convoy and delivered the enemy to the *Duke of York*. The *Duke of York* fought the *Scharnhorst* "hard, skilfully, and well, and after being subjected to the full weight of the enemy's fire for over an hour and a half, won a capital ship gun-action at night. The skilled handling of the *Savage*, *Saumarez*, *Scorpion* and *Stord* in instantly perceiving the opportunity for their audacious attack, and the gallant way in which they pressed it home under intense fire," had ensured the *Scharnhorst's* destruction.

It may be added here that the four destroyers, *Musketeer*, *Matchless*, *Opportune* and *Virago*, which helped to sink the *Scharnhorst* at the end, were commanded respectively by Commander R. L. Fisher, Lieutenant W. D. Shaw, Commander J. Lee-Barber, and Lieut.-Commander A. J.

White. No German destroyers were reported by the Admiralty to have taken any part in the action or even to have been seen in the neighbourhood, although the enemy put it about that several destroyers had accompanied the *Scharnhorst*. The accounts of the action seem to show that when Admiral Burnett for the second time interposed his cruisers between the enemy and the convoy, the *Scharnhorst's* captain lost his nerve and only thought of making for his base. It was strange that he did not use his after 11-in. guns against the cruisers that followed him, which he might have done with effect, but his attitude was even more defensive than that of the weaker *Admiral Graf von Spee* at the battle off the River Plate. According to the German account of the action, Rear-Admiral Bay was in command of the "operational force" and presumably went down with the *Scharnhorst*, as did her commander, Captain Hintze.

From the Arctic the scene now shifted to the Bay of Biscay. On December 27 an armed blockade-runner, described in a combined Admiralty and Air Ministry announcement of December 30 as "a fast modern ship of about 5,000 tons . . . with one gun mounted on the poop-deck and others on both bows and amidships," was seen steaming on an easterly course at about 15 knots, "apparently inward-bound for a port on the west coast of France." The Sunderland flying-boat which had sighted her signalled the information of the presence of a suspicious-looking ship, and other aircraft on patrol in the vicinity were diverted to the area, which was about 500 miles west-north-west of Cape Finisterre.

"The cruisers H.M.S. *Glasgow* (Captain C. P. Clarke) and H.M.S. *Enterprise* (Captain H. T. Grant) were disposed to intercept, and Coastal Command Halifaxes, Liberators, and Sunderlands were dispatched. For several hours, pending the arrival of this force, aircraft of R.A.F. and R.C.A.F. squadrons shadowed the blockade-runner, in spite of adverse weather.

"The first attack was carried out by a Sunderland of the R.C.A.F. During the run-in the aircraft was damaged by anti-aircraft fire from the enemy ship, but the Sunderland pressed home the attack, and one bomb was seen to explode close to the blockade-runner. Later, a Liberator from a Czech squadron successfully engaged the enemy ship. A bomb hit the stern which burst into flame and caused an explosion of such intensity that the force rocked the aircraft, which was flying about 600 feet above the

ship." Soon afterwards the ship was ablaze from stem to stern. Other aircraft, which arrived later, reported that the ship was lying stopped, listing heavily to port and down aft. At intervals there were fresh explosions. About 70 of her crew had abandoned ship and had taken to rafts and boats.

Next day the two cruisers and aircraft of the R.A.F. and the U.S. Navy fought a most successful action against a strong force of German destroyers which had put to sea perhaps to keep "a rendezvous with a homeward-bound blockade-runner." The Admiralty gave an account of this engagement, which the writer has summarized as follows :

Shortly after dawn a Liberator of the U.S. Navy, operating with Coastal Command, sighted 11 German destroyers in position about 200 miles from the scene of the previous day's action. Of these five were of the modern "Narvik" class, each mounting five 5.9-in. guns, and six of the "Elbing" class, each mounting four 4.1-in. guns. The destroyers were steaming westwards at about 20 knots. The aircraft signalled the enemy's position. The *Glasgow* and *Enterprise*, who were between the destroyers and their bases in Southern France, made full speed in their direction. Our aircraft continued to shadow the German ships in spite of poor visibility, attempted interference by enemy aircraft and considerable A.A. fire from the destroyers. The enemy then turned to the eastward.

The British cruisers sighted the destroyers early in the afternoon at a distance of some 12 miles to the south-west. Both opened fire on the enemy, who replied. For an hour there was a running fight to the south-eastward and many hits were scored on the German ships. Halifaxes and a Sunderland of Coastal Command with Liberators of the U.S. Navy joined in the fight and made delaying attacks, while Beaufighters and Mosquitoes of Coastal Command provided overhead cover for the cruisers. These encountered little opposition from enemy aircraft, but a Heinkel 177 was shot into the sea by a Mosquito.

The German destroyers showed no eagerness to fight and split into two or three groups, and later into smaller units in their endeavours to escape. The cruisers concentrated their pursuit on four of the enemy destroyers, who had turned north. The ensuing running fight lasted until dusk. The enemy attempted to cover himself by using a smoke-screen.

H.M.S. *Glasgow* reported that during the various engagements three destroyers had been sunk by gunfire and that the remainder had escaped, although several of these were known to be damaged. About 150 survivors in lifeboats, dinghies or on rafts, were sighted by our aircraft. H.M.S. *Glasgow* suffered few casualties, and such damage as was sustained by our cruisers was of a minor nature. A Halifax and a Beaufighter were reported missing.

The *Glasgow*, of 9,000 tons, carried 12 6-in. guns. The older *Enterprise* carried only seven. Weight of gunfire was on the side of the Germans, who had 25 5.9-in. and 24 4.1-in. guns against 19 6-in., but the superior concentration of our gun-power no doubt told. Nevertheless the enemy cut a poor figure in the action, and his High

Command's attempts to improve it by the invention of a counter-attack by U-boats which had sunk several British destroyers in the Bay of Biscay only provoked derision. Of the crews of the lost German ships, 162 officers and men were picked up by the Irish merchantman *Kerlogue* and brought to Eire, where they were interned in spite of the German Minister's protests.

Such were the principal naval events of the seventeenth quarter of the War in the Atlantic and Arctic Oceans and in the seas round Britain. Aided by Allied and Dominion forces and not least by the indefatigable Coastal Command aircraft, the Navy had more than held its own against the U-boats and had gone far to winning the Battle of the Arctic by the destruction of the formidable *Scharnhorst* in an action where its good shooting, its skilful combined tactics and the splendid initiative of its destroyers showed that its quality was as high as ever.

2 : IN THE AIR

The period from October 1 to the end of the year was marked by a further intensification of the bombing of targets in Germany and the more accessible occupied territories by night and by day. The Germans met the attack by a variety of defensive measures. They continued to produce far more fighters than bombers. They improved the rocket-firing apparatus mounted on many of the fighter planes. They dropped flares above attacking squadrons in order to light them up for the benefit of their night-fighters and A.A. batteries ; they increased the strength and apparently improved the training of their night-fighter squadrons ; and they recalled many formations from Russia and, it would appear, from Norway and, less certainly, from southern Europe for the defence of the Reich and the western air approaches to it. Nevertheless, although they frequently inflicted heavy losses on the attack, they failed to save a great number of German cities, Berlin among them, from a series of terribly punishing raids. Apart from these measures they sought to hearten the gloomy and shaken

populations of the bombed regions by great exaggerations of Allied air losses, claiming to have shot down far more raiders than actually failed to return, and by minimizing their own losses of fighters in the day attacks made by the United States heavy bombers. They also attempted to obtain neutral sympathy and to excite the fury of their people by describing every attack as a "terror raid," and by admitting heavy civilian losses and damage even when they minimized the military effect of the constant bombing.

In fact, the military effect of these attacks was serious. The destruction of some factories, the diminution of output at others which were damaged but not destroyed, the constant interruption of work by alerts, the destruction of the quarters where the operatives lived, the wrecking of power stations, communications, and water supplies unquestionably reduced the German industrial potential to a marked degree. Their effect on the *morale* of the population varied. While there was no evidence of any widespread collapse, neutral witnesses agreed that in many of the cities which had suffered, a dull anger against the British and Americans was combined with a sour resignation to the worst that could happen. In some the prevailing mood was one of gloomy apathy. The reader will find a more detailed treatment of this subject in Chapter VII of this volume. Here it can only be said that the moral effect of the bombings, though it might not have weakened the determination of the majority of Germans to resist to the utmost and for as long as possible, had largely destroyed the belief in ultimate victory. All that the Germans could now do was to play for time, to fight a defensive battle in the hope that the alliance between Russia and the Western Powers might snap through internal strains or that war-weariness and the heavy losses incidental to an invasion of the West of Europe might induce the Allies to be content with less than the unconditional surrender of the Reich.

It cannot, however, be said that the bombings of the chief German cities aroused any particular elation in Great Britain. No doubt there were people who derived

much satisfaction from the news that an entire quarter in Berlin or Stuttgart had been far more completely reduced to a wilderness of rubble heaps than a corresponding area in Rotterdam or Coventry. But in spite of their activity in the Correspondence Columns of the British Press the advocates of air reprisals were probably no more numerous, and possibly less numerous, than another minority who disapproved altogether of the bombing of any cities irrespective of their military importance to the enemy.¹ The majority of the British regarded these operations as a cruel necessity forced upon us by the exigencies of "totalitarian" war and defensible because they promised to shorten its duration. At the same time such of them as followed the announcements of the Air Ministry sometimes felt that when they asserted that the targets selected for attack were directly or indirectly "military" they did "protest too much." It was possible that "cascade bombing" in which perhaps 60 tons of explosive might be dropped on a target area in a minute, might be more accurate than earlier methods of attack. But it was not easy to understand how the Berlin "Zoo," or a University Library or a neutral Legation could be classed as "military targets," wrecked though they were.

A little more than half-way through the quarter began the series of heavy attacks on the capital of the Reich which the Press styled "The Battle of Berlin." They appeared to aim at making Berlin untenable by the Government and by such heavy industries as might survive the raids. It was the conviction of some of the chiefs of the R.A.F. that the moral and material effect of the evacuation of Berlin would be equivalent to that caused by a major

¹ The "reprisalists," if one may coin the word, included quite a sprinkling of clergymen. One wondered whether they would have carried their advocacy of a "tit for tat" policy to the logical conclusion of demanding that a cannibal chief, who had eaten a missionary, should himself grace the table of the Governor. The people who disliked the bombings of cities on the ground that they killed, maimed or ruined numbers of guiltless civilians, were voicing an instinctive aversion to "totalitarian" warfare by whomsoever practised, but they were not necessarily pacifists. The writer knows many who regard the war as just and necessary but believe that, even nowadays, its total application is neither just nor wise.

military disaster. Others were credited with the belief that the destruction or complete immobilization of a high proportion of the larger industrial centres in Germany, and especially of Berlin, would eventually force the Reich to surrender without the additional pressure of a "second front." This was a disputable opinion which did not at all commend itself to the Russians and invited sceptical comment from those who remembered how grossly the effects of our air attacks on German production for war in 1940-42 had been exaggerated, but forgot or did not realize how greatly the numerical strength and striking power of the Allies in the Fortress of Britain had increased during the past year. It was said that Air Marshal Harris himself was not committed to any such opinion, but that he believed that the systematic bombing of industrial Germany would shorten the war and should, therefore, be given a thorough trial.

NOTE TO THE READER

In the following chronicle of the principal attacks and counter-attacks on the western front the writer has included attacks made on German targets from North Africa but not the raids on the French Riviera and Adriatic targets from North Africa or southern Italy which became numerous during the quarter. The numerals in brackets—e.g. (9)—mean that so many Allied bombers did not return from some major operation. It does not, however, follow that all were lost in that operation, for when a major raid—e.g., on Berlin—was combined with a diversionary attack on some other German industrial centre and with mine-laying or attacks on shipping on the same night the loss reported usually covered all the operations of that night. The reader will naturally and rightly assume that (9b. 3f.) will signify the loss of nine bombers and three fighter aircraft on a particular date. The writer must add that so many and various were the air operations essayed by the Allies over Germany, occupied Norway and Western Europe and the narrow seas that it is quite impossible to record them all within the compass of a single chapter.

The quarter opened with an attack on south Germany by bombers from North Africa, which was the subject of the following announcement from Algiers :

Heavy bombers from North Africa were over Germany for the first time, and also over Austria. U.S.A.A.F. Flying Fortresses crossed the Alps and flew over the Munich region of southern Germany. They made a round trip of approximately 1,800 miles, their longest yet from north-west African bases. Heavy clouds over the target obscured observation of results. Some enemy fighters were encountered. At the same time American Liberators attacked a factory at Wiener Neustadt, 25 miles south-west of Vienna, where air frames for Messerschmitt fighters are

manufactured. The formations consisted of B24 units of the Eighth Air Force, operating under the directions of the North-West African Air Forces, and B24 units formerly with the Ninth Air Force.

On the night of October 2 the R.A.F. attacked Munich (9) in some strength. On the following night Kassel (24) was the target, and our bombers dropped 1,500 tons of explosive on their objective in little more than half an hour. Frankfurt and Ludwigshafen (12) were raided on the night of October 4-5. After an interval of two nights the R.A.F. raided several towns in south Germany (7), making Stuttgart the chief objective, but also attacking Friedrichshafen on Lake Constance and harassing Munich with Mosquitoes. Cloud prevented the results of the Stuttgart raid being fully observed. Bad weather then delayed further night operations on any extensive scale until after mid-October. On the night of October 17 Mosquitoes made their 83rd raid of the war and their 15th during the last two months on Berlin, and on the night of October 18 the R.A.F. in strength bombed Hanover (17) and made smaller, perhaps diversionary, attacks on other places in western Germany. The night of October 20 was marked by a heavy attack on Leipzig, a most important centre for the manufacture of aircraft components and a railway junction of high military significance. It was unfortunate that bad weather conditions should have interfered with the attack, though there was good reason to believe that they also handicapped the defence. Otherwise the raid following on a day of air battles over Duren and northern France might have inflicted a heavy blow on the prestige of the *Luftwaffe*. We lost 17 bombers. The next night attack (October 22-23) was divided between Kassel, which bore the brunt of the attack in the shape of 1,500 tons of bombs, and Frankfurt. Mosquitoes also raided the Cologne area. Resistance from the enemy's *flak* and his night-fighters was heavy and the night cost the R.A.F. 44 bombers and a fighter, a heavy toll of trained crews. Great damage was reported, for the weather, though bad on the outward journey, was clear above the target. The Air Ministry reported on November 1 :

"Within the town industry is destroyed and there is extremely heavy industrial damage in the suburbs." There had been huge fires in the city which were still smouldering a week later. All the three main Henschel factories producing transport locomotives, tanks, lorries and military transport were hit, as were some of the chief factories in Germany for the production of tents, tent-cloth and wagon covers. Railway damage was also heavy.

Meanwhile the American heavy bomber squadrons had been active by day, and light and medium British and American bombers had frequently raided occupied enemy territory. Fighter bombers had also contributed their quota to these attacks, which were accompanied by strong escorts of fighters. Fighter sweeps and intruder attacks also harassed the enemy. The first heavy raid of the 8th U.S.A.A.F. during the quarter was directed against the important naval base of Emden on October 3. The attack was driven home with vigour. The bombers were escorted by Thunderbolt long-range fighters which accounted for five of the 19 German fighters brought down in this raid, the remainder falling to the heavy fire of the Fortresses. The Americans only lost two machines. On the same day light and medium British and Allied bombers and fighter-bombers attacked electric power and transformer stations in northern France with strong fighter escorts, while Marauders raided enemy airfields in Holland, and attacks on airfields in France did much to keep the German fighters from troubling. Four bombers and 11 fighters made up the tale of the Allied loss, while 24 German fighters were shot down.

Then came three daylight attacks on important German targets, each delivered in great strength by the United States "heavies." A summary of the official statements issued on each occasion gives the following results :

On October 4 a strong force of Fortresses attacked Frankfurt by day for the first time, while minor attacks were directed against other targets in western Germany. At the same time Liberators crossed the North Sea and demonstrated near the German coasts, drawing off a number of German fighter aircraft. The Flying Fortresses were escorted on their outward journey by Thunderbolts, and on their return by British Spitfires. While 15 American heavy bombers were missing after this great combined operation, the Germans lost 75 fighters, of which 19 were claimed by the Thunderbolt escort.

On October 8, after minor operations by other types of aircraft, the

Fortresses went out by day to bomb Bremen and Vegesack (30 b. 3 f.). Fighters came up in strength and *flak* was heavy. So was the German loss, which the Americans computed at 142 machines. The third attack was concentrated against the roller and ball-bearing factories at Schweinfurt, targets of the highest importance, the destruction of which would impose serious delays on many classes of German military production. The weather was favourable and all available evidence showed that the attack, although very costly, had been most successful. The enemy was debited with the loss of 106 fighters certainly destroyed and 45 "probables." His aircraft had counter-attacked boldly, many attempts at interception were made as the Americans made their way back across France; and these with the heavy *flak* had accounted for 60 American heavy bombers and two fighters. News from neutral sources and photographic reconnaissance showed that great damage had been inflicted. It was, indeed, estimated that only 25 per cent of the production of these factories could be restored at any useful date and even this would take time. In a report to the U.S. Secretary for War, General Arnold, Commanding General of the U.S.A.A.F., said of this and other raids: "At Regensburg (August 17, 1943) and Schweinfurt . . . we also paid heavily but our sacrifices were amply justified by results. It is possible that the Schweinfurt mission . . . may prove to have been one of the decisive air actions of the war. The plants of Schweinfurt produced over 50 per cent of Germany's ball-bearings. The vital importance of ball-bearings in industry and the fact that it is not practicable to assemble large stock-piles of them, made these plants a first priority target. All five of the works at Schweinfurt have been either completely or almost completely wiped out. . . . It was an attack that will not have to be repeated for a very long time, if at all."¹

The Americans attacked a new target on October 20, viz., Düren, 25 miles south-west of Cologne, a town known for its important non-ferrous metal works. Statements issued by Air Ministry and the U.S.A.A.F. showed that the day had been marked by wide-spread fighting.

"Fighter Command Spitfires accompanied the American bombers on part of their flight and destroyed three German fighters which attempted to intercept the bombers over Douai. Eight enemy machines were shot down by the Fortresses and their escorting Thunderbolts, and nine more were destroyed by Spitfires in a morning sweep over France, making a total of 20 victories for the day. Allied losses were eight bombers and two fighters." Typhoon bombers and Typhoons also attacked airfields in France and Holland, and a force of Flying Fortresses bombed the Gilze-Rijen airfield (Holland) on the same day.

A series of important operations over northern France and the Low Countries followed. On October 22 Marauders attacked the Evreux-Fauville aerodrome by day while Typhoon fighter-bombers raided the Tricqueville and Abbeville aerodromes and Bostons attacked

¹ This report was published in part on January 3, 1944.

targets in the Low Countries. These appear to have been strongly protected, for of the seven machines which we lost to the German eight in the day's operations, six were Boston bombers. The next attacks covered a wide range.

On October 23 and 24 Cherbourg, the airfield at Beauvais and those at Schipol and Woensdrecht in Holland were attacked, among other objectives. We lost seven machines to the enemy's 14. On the 25th R.A.F. and the Dutch Naval Air Arm raided the Lanveuc aerodrome near Brest, accompanied by escorts of Spitfires and Typhoons. Typhoons attacked Cherbourg, the Maupertuis aerodrome near the port and the power station at Caen. Six Allied machines were lost that day and the Dutch mourned the death of Commander E. Bakker, O.C., Royal Dutch Naval Air Service, whose machine was destroyed by a direct hit over Brest. On October 28 Cherbourg was the target, and on the following day Typhoon-bombers and their escort of Typhoon fighters raided Guipavas airfield, near Brest. On the 30th it was the turn of the Lessay airfield on the Cherbourg peninsula, and on October 31 escorted Whirlwinds, Typhoon bombers and Bostons did much damage to the Cherbourg docks.

Although widespread fog had hindered air operations in October, we had carried out nine major raids on the Reich in which 13,000 tons of explosives and incendiaries were dropped. In November, in spite of spells of bad weather, the attack was pressed with the utmost energy. On November 3 over 400 Flying Fortresses and Liberators attacked Wilhelmshaven (5) and shot down 34 intercepting German machines, while American Marauders, escorted by British, Dominion and Allied Spitfires, attacked enemy airfields in France and Holland, destroying 14 enemy fighters for the loss of ten aircraft. That night an extremely powerful force of R.A.F. bombers attacked Düsseldorf with devastating effect (19), and four hostile fighters were shot down during the raid, in which our "Pathfinder" aircraft were officially stated to have shown remarkable skill in preparing the way for the bomber squadrons.

Although weather conditions over the Alps from the beginning of November, when the first snowstorms were to be expected, were unusually unfavourable for a while, the North-West African Strategic Air Force had delivered a weighty attack on Wiener Neustadt on November 2 (6). A heavy concentration of bombs was dropped on the enemy's important works there, one string of bombs

falling right across the Steyr-Daimler-Puch works which make armoured vehicles. Thirty enemy fighters were shot down. Three days later the 8th U.S.A.A.F. sent bombers with Thunderbolts and Lightnings for escort against industrial targets at Gelsenkirchen and railway yards at Münster. Official accounts said that

the bombers were "as numerous as the record-breaking number which attacked Wilhelmshaven" (on November 3) and that they had accounted for 20 of 38 German fighters which had been shot down. Ten heavy bombers were lost, and the total loss in machines for the day, which also saw attacks on military targets in northern France and fighter sweeps, amounted to 12 bombers and five fighters. On November 7 the U.S.A.A.F. bombers returned to Düren escorted by P47s (Thunderbolts), while Lightnings made diversionary sweeps over northern France. On November 10 a force of 500 fighters and fighter-bombers made a huge sweep over northern France, and on November 11 an announcement said that Flying Fortresses had raided Münster, while fighters attacked targets in the Cherbourg peninsula and the Pas de Calais (4b. 3f.). Twenty-two German fighters were brought down.

During these days the R.A.F. had made several attacks on German communications with northern Italy through southern France. Thus on the night of November 10-11 Bomber Command made a heavy attack on Modane at the entrance of the Mont Cenis tunnel without loss, and on November 11-12 the attack was carried to the Riviera coast routes (7), especially the viaduct at Anthéor. A period of bad weather delayed operations against Germany for some days, but on November 16 Flying Fortresses and Liberators made a successful raid on Knaben in southern Norway, the centre of the molybdenum industry in that country, and on the power plant at Rjukan (2). On November 18 Liberators with American crews attacked the *Luftwaffe's* repair and maintenance base in Norway at Kjeller, 11 miles south-east of Oslo (9). Eight German machines were shot down. Three of the missing American machines came down in Sweden, where their crews were interned.

By this time attacks on Germany had been resumed. After a raid on Ludwigshafen on November 17-18, the R.A.F. began a series of terrible raids on Berlin, which is still continuing. Here is a list of the attacks made during this quarter, the losses incurred, and the tonnage of bombs dropped.

Date.	Tons of Bombs dropped.	Date.	Tons of Bombs dropped.
November 18-19 (32)	5,000	December 2-3 (41)	1,500
„ 22-23 (26)		„ 16-17 (30)	1,500
„ 23-24 (20)		„ 23-24 (17)	1,000
„ 26-27 (32)	1,000	„ 29-30 (20)	2,000
		Total	12,000

According to official information the first of these raids was carried out by Lancaster squadrons of the R.A.F., R.C.A.F. and R.A.A.F. Every Lancaster carried one 4,000-lb. bomb in its load. Visibility, however, was poor. On the same night Ludwigshafen was raided.

The attacks on Berlin caused terrible destruction and no small loss of life. By the end of the year perhaps a fifth of the built-up area of the city, perhaps more, had either been destroyed or was in a state of ruinous dilapidation. Great numbers of the inhabitants were sent to the east and south. Czechoslovakia became the refuge of several State departments. The writer has made no attempt to enumerate the principal devastated areas in the city, nor has he attempted to give any estimate of the numbers who fled or were sent away by the authorities. The destruction was continuing at the end of December and there were many raids to come. And in the intervals between the great attacks Mosquito bombers harassed the city and kept the batteries and searchlights active and the inhabitants awake by night. To all appearance Berlin as a capital and as a city was doomed to destruction, street by street, quarter by quarter.

Berlin was by no means the only target of the R.A.F., which was now strong enough to make two major raids on occasion during a single night. On November 19-20 the bombers attacked the important chemical centre of Leverkusen (5). The last week of the month was marked by terrific aerial activity by day and night. A summary of official announcements gives the following results, from which the raids on Berlin are omitted :

On November 23 British and U.S. aircraft made several attacks on military targets in occupied France and the Netherlands. On the night of the third major Berlin raid Mosquitoes were out over western Germany. On November 25 the Allied Air Forces made heavy attacks on targets in France where the Americans used fighter-bombers for the first time. That

night, while Mosquitoes troubled Berlin, the R.A.F. made a major attack on Frankfurt (13). Next day a force of U.S. heavy bombers, stronger than any yet seen over the Continent, and escorted by American and R.A.F. fighters, raided Bremen, while great forces of fighters made supporting sweeps over the Netherlands and northern France. The total Allied loss was 39 machines. Of the enemy's fighters 56 were claimed, a high proportion by the bombers, and five more were brought down near Calais and Cherbourg. That night the R.A.F. raided Stuttgart as well as Berlin. On November 29 Flying Fortresses with fighter escort raided Bremen again, while Marauders escorted by R.A.F., Dominion and Allied fighter squadrons attacked Chieftes aerodrome south of Brussels, Typhoon fighter-bombers with Typhoon fighter escort raided Moorseele aerodrome in Belgium and hostile shipping off Brest. The Allies claimed 45 German fighters during the day. They lost 13 heavy bombers and 18 fighters.

November ended and December opened with daylight attacks by the Americans on Solingen, a great Rhineland centre of steel production, while lighter bombers harassed the enemy in France. The two days cost the Allies 49 aircraft, including 29 heavy bombers, and the Germans 40 fighters. On the night of December 3-4, the R.A.F., after a feint on Berlin, dropped 1,500 tons of bombs on Leipzig (24). Then bad weather gave the enemy a respite. On December 8 Air Vice-Marshal Saundby, Deputy-Chief of Bomber Command, stated that "nearly a quarter" of the built-up area of the German cities already attacked had been devastated.

On December 11 the U.S.A.A.F. returned to Emden, where the Fortresses were heavily attacked. They were over 1,000 strong, they lost 20 of their number, but they and their escorts inflicted terrible punishment on attacking German fighter-squadrons, and claimed between them to have shot down 138 of their opponents.

On December 13 and 16 unspecified targets in north-west Germany were attacked by escorted U.S. heavy bombers, and on the first occasion over 1,000 of these monsters were engaged there and in attacks on Schiphol aerodrome and other vulnerable points. These two operations cost the Americans 20 aircraft, three of them fighters, but they brought down nearly as many enemy fighters during their second attack alone. December 20 was a day of great activity. The 8th U.S.A.A.F. attacked Bremen in great strength (25 b., 8 f.), while Marauders

raided objectives in France¹ without loss, and their escort claimed the destruction of eight hostile aircraft, which with the 42 claimed over Bremen made a total of 50 for the day.

The aerial operations of the last eleven days of December may now be summarized on the basis of the official reports of the Air Ministry and American Headquarters.

On the night of December 20-21 the main attack was against Frankfurt, on which a powerful force of R.A.F. heavy bombers dropped over 2,000 tons of high explosives and incendiaries between 7.30 p.m. and 8 p.m. A secondary attack was made on Mannheim-Ludwigshafen. German fighters dropped flares over our bombers while they were often 100 miles from their target, but these were dropped from such a height that many drifted and aircraft surrounded by them escaped being fired upon. These operations, with Mosquito raids, mine-laying and attacks by Coastal Command on enemy shipping, cost us 42 aircraft. On December 21 hundreds of British and U.S. medium bombers attacked military installations in the Pas de Calais. Their crews described the co-operation of great forces of British, American, Dominion and Allied fighter squadrons as "perfect". Eight hostile machines were felled against our loss of seven machines. On December 22 U.S. heavies with fighter support bombed unspecified targets in north-west Germany in strength (21 bombers, 4 fighters) and destroyed 38 hostile machines. Further heavy attacks were made on objectives in northern France on December 23.

On Christmas Eve, after the previous night's raid on Berlin and objectives in central and western Germany, over 2,000 aircraft, light and medium bombers and fighter and fighter-bomber formations, including more than 1,300 American-manned machines, attacked what was known now as "the secret weapon coast" of France with excellent effect and did not lose a single machine. Then, after the Berlin raid of December 29-30, "the largest number of heavy bombers and the largest number of fighters ever dispatched by the Eighth A.A.F. attacked targets in south-west Germany. . . . The bombers were escorted and supported by United States, R.A.F., Dominion and Allied fighters. Twenty-three enemy fighters were destroyed, 11 by the bombers and 12 by the fighters. From this operation 22 bombers and 12 fighters are missing." This operation was combined with a series of raids on objectives near the north coast of France in which five enemy

¹ It was reported that the unspecified military targets in northern France which were frequently attacked during the quarter comprised concrete platforms constructed in front of tunnels and that these were intended for "booster platforms" or "takes-off" for the "secret weapon" of which German agents made much in neutral countries. Whether this secret weapon was a gun firing a huge rocket or a Robot wireless-controlled aeroplane carrying a great quantity of explosive which would itself be equivalent to a huge bomb was far from clear. The Germans talked of both by turns. But the existence of these concrete structures in northern France suggested that the enemy had some such weapon in mind; and it was therefore common prudence on the part of the British Government to assume that these reports were founded on a basis of fact and to order action which would prevent or delay the action of whatever weapon might emerge upon these platforms.

aircraft were shot down and three R.A.F. and U.S.A.A.F. machines were lost. The year closed with a large-scale attack by Flying Fortresses and Liberators on ball-bearing factories near Paris and on the Chateau Bernard airfield at Cognac in south-western France. Heavy attacks by light and medium bombers of the R.A.F., including Fighting French and Dutch squadrons, were launched against military installations in many coastal regions of northern France. In spite of several attempts by large numbers of German fighters to intercept the returning aircraft only one machine was reported missing.

So ended a year in which, as the Aeronautical Correspondent of *The Times* pointed out (*loc. cit.* January 6, 1944), the Allied air forces had nearly reversed Göring's prophecy that every bomb dropped on German soil would be repaid a hundredfold. During the year the R.A.F. alone had dropped 136,000 tons of bombs on Germany against 2,500 tons dropped by the *Luftwaffe* on Britain. The Eighth Air Force had dropped 55,000 tons on Germany, and squadrons from North Africa had added to the total. Speaking on October 14 at the Constitutional Club, Sir Archibald Sinclair had said that the Anglo-American air offensive was rocking German military power to its foundations. Although hard pressed by the Russians, the German High Command had yet been compelled to concentrate over two-thirds of its fighter force against our bomber offensive.

The Battle of the Ruhr would rank as one of the decisive battles of history, six or seven thousand gallant airmen flying through the night to the Ruhr cities with hundreds of thousands of Germans below manning their guns and searchlights, and the great night-fighter organization the strength of which they had more than doubled during the past year. Among all the centres of German war industry Essen held pride of place. In a tremendous series of raids from March to July, Essen, and Krupps with it, had been shattered. Bomber Command might have to return there to check any attempts at partial reconstruction, but the result of these attacks had been catastrophic. Germany had no reserves of labour. She was stretched to the utmost to provide for the needs of her armies and her civilian population. By far the greater part of the destruction wrought in the munitions industries of Germany and the surrounding built-up areas was therefore irreparable. Our casualties had not been light, yet during the past few months of fighting against enormously strengthened German defences, the casualty rate had been less than a year ago—"a miracle of scientific achievement, sound training and resourceful tactics."

The progress of the offensive during the remainder of the quarter had borne out the Air Minister's confident words.

German attacks on Great Britain during the quarter were but pin-pricks compared to the stabs driven home

by the R.A.F. and their American allies. The "hit-and-run" methods of the previous year and the earlier months of 1943 were abandoned, perhaps only temporarily, in favour of raids by small numbers of fighter-bombers, flying high and taking care to make off at once after bombing their targets or "firing into the brown" by dropping their missiles casually. So, though they claimed—in order to encourage their own people—to have done great damage in London and elsewhere, the Germans in fact accomplished little against civilian and still less against military targets. At the same time the small numbers of machines which they used in these raids and their high speed frequently enabled them to escape without much loss from our night-fighters, although their employment of small forces enabled the British A.A. batteries to concentrate a greater volume of fire on single machines than would have been possible in the case of heavier raids.

During the first ten days of October German air activity over the United Kingdom was unimportant except on the night of October 7.

On that occasion about 60 hostile aircraft crossed the East Anglian coast. After crossing it some turned north and according to German official statements attacked Norwich, starting large fires there. Others dropped bombs elsewhere in the eastern counties and about 15 machines penetrated to the London area where they did some non-military damage and caused a fair number of fatal casualties. The raiders, however, were unable to get through the screen of A.A. fire in any sort of formation, and although small numbers were over the capital, off and on, for over an hour, the raid had no military significance and seemed to have been undertaken purely for purposes of propaganda. The statement of the German home wireless service that "huge fires were seen spreading towards the centre of London" and that "explosions multiplied continuously," and the assertion of Paris Radio that this had been the most terrible raid that London had endured for two years, confirmed this impression. Three raiders were certainly shot down.

During the next fortnight the Germans were more active over the south-eastern coast, East Anglia and London, but the number of aircraft employed on any single night was very small. They claimed to have successfully attacked Hull, Great Yarmouth and "selected targets" in London. It was true that small numbers of raiders reached the London area on eight successive

nights (October 16-23 both inclusive) in the course of visits to the south-eastern counties and East Anglia, but the enemy did no serious damage, though there was some loss of life. The enemy lost 11 aircraft in these raids. There were several more small raids in the course of which East Anglian towns were hit during the last week of October. Civilian casualties during the whole month were :

	<i>Men</i>	<i>Women</i>	<i>Children under 16</i>	<i>Total</i>
Killed	53	48	17	118
Injured and detained in hospital	119	123	41	283
				<u>401</u>

In November the enemy made another series of raids on East Anglia and the Home Counties. They never crossed the Channel or North Sea in any strength but they inflicted some damage, and on the night of November 7 during the sixth successive small-scale attack on the London area a single aeroplane dropped two bombs, one of which set fire to a large furniture store while another killed a number of people in a dance hall and others in the street. Another small attack on the following night closed a series of seven successive nuisance raids. An attack on an East Anglian town on the evening of November 3 caused a number of fatal casualties. Before dawn on November 16 German machines raided a south-western town, causing damage and loss of life in industrial and residential quarters. There were several short alerts, sometimes followed by light attacks in the London area during the last half of the month and also in East Anglia and on the south-east coast. The casualties for the month were :

	<i>Men</i>	<i>Women</i>	<i>Children under 16</i>	<i>Un- identified</i>	<i>Total</i>
Killed or missing, believed killed.	41	49	28	1	119
Injured and de- tained in hospi- tal.	76	134	28		238
					<u>357</u>
				<i>Total</i>	
					<u>357</u>

In December hostile air activity died down to a few feeble demonstrations chiefly over south-eastern England. Casualties were trifling. They totalled :

	<i>Men</i>	<i>Women</i>	<i>Children under 16</i>	<i>Total</i>
Killed or missing, believed killed	3	4	3	10
Injured and detained in hospital	20	20	1	41
				<u>51</u>
			<i>Total</i>	
				<u>51</u>

The following were the respective losses of the *Luftwaffe*, the R.A.F., and the U.S.A.A.F. on the western air fronts during the quarter.

Over and Around Britain, 1943 (last quarter).

		German	R.A.F.	U.S.A.A.F.
October	.. ..	24	—	—
November	.. ..	13	—	—
December	.. ..	6	—	—
		<u>43</u>	<u>Nil</u>	<u>Nil</u>

Over Western and North-Western Europe, 1943 (last quarter).

		German	R.A.F.	U.S.A.A.F.
		By R.A.F.	By U.S.A.A.F.	
October	....	102	861	227
November	.. ..	61	247	224
December		127	329	221
Total		<u>290</u>	<u>1437=1727</u>	<u>672</u>
Grand Total		1770	672	529

The reader may be interested by the following necessarily incomplete summary of Axis and British and Allied losses in air combats in various theatres from the beginning of the war to December 31, 1943. Figures for Allied losses in the Philippines, the Dutch East Indies, in the south-west Pacific theatre, the Aleutians and other Pacific battle areas are not available. The Japanese loss of aircraft in the south-west Pacific theatre alone is estimated at about 6,500. No figures are available for German losses in air fighting over Russia, Poland, Holland, Belgium and Yugoslavia with the Air Forces of those countries nor for the loss inflicted by the French Air Force before the surrender.

<i>Theatre (Over)</i>	<i>Axis</i>	<i>Allies</i>
Britain	4,303	901 (R.A.F.)
Northern and Western Europe	2,606	6,950 (R.A.F.)
Middle East Command	3,841 ²	2,171 (Allied) ³
North Africa, Sicily and Italy	3,967	1,525 (Allied) ⁴
South-east Asia Command ⁵ ..	799	169 (Allied)
U.S.A.A.F. in Northern and Western Europe	4,304	1,159
Western Front 1939-40	957	379 (R.A.F.)
Norway, 1940	56	55 (R.A.F.)
Russia (R.A.F. Wing)	15	1
Naval, by A.A. fire and Fleet Air Arm (British)	1,086	—
	<u>21,934</u>	<u>13,310</u>

¹ Subject to eventual revision.

² Including 1,471 German and Italian aircraft shot down in attacks on Malta, and losses in the Greek campaigns.

³ Including Greek, French and U.S. machines as well as those of the R.A.F.

⁴ R.A.F., U.S.A.A.F., and French.

⁵ In India, Burma, etc.

CHAPTER V

THE FAR EASTERN WAR

I : BURMA AND THE INDIAN OCEAN

In spite of the close of the rainy season at the beginning of October there were no ground operations on a large scale in Burma until the end of the year. On the other hand, Allied air activity increased with clearer skies, and Japanese internal communications, transport, store depots and barracks were constantly attacked as were the enemy's numerous aerodromes. The Japanese Air Force generally followed a defensive policy, making few raids, and these usually in no great strength. At sea the enemy, obviously apprehending attack from Ceylon, showed rather more reconnoitring activity over the Indian Ocean than he had previously done, but this activity was aerial and no incursions of his surface ships into the Bay of Bengal were reported.

October began with attacks on the Japanese positions in Arakan by Vengeance dive-bombers and Hurricane fighters and fighter-bombers of the R.A.F. On October 6 G.H.Q., Delhi, announced an exceptionally successful attack on October 4, when

"R.A.F. Beaufighters patrolling the railway line to Myitkyina" damaged 20 locomotives between Indaw and Sagaung. "Other targets damaged in this area included 10 water-tanks, 28 wagons and several motor-vehicles. Other Beaufighters, patrolling the lower Irrawaddy, attacked a large river steamer . . . and damaged about 20 other river craft." These and other operations that day cost the R.A.F. only one machine. That night and on the night of October 5-6 Wellingtons bombed railway installations at Prome, while Beaufighters continuing their raids on transport on October 5 damaged five more locomotives and several river craft.

United States aircraft damaged harbour installations at Rangoon on October 3 and 4, and made long-distance raids and reconnaissances over northern Burma. Patrol encounters became more frequent as the weather improved, and an official report received in London on

October 11 stated that the enemy was sending out patrols of unusual strength on the Chindwin and Arakan fronts. Two attacks by strong patrols on our outposts in the Chin hills region had been repulsed with loss, while a British patrol had ambushed a stronger enemy force near Maungdaw, Arakan, and had killed 24 Japanese at small cost. The R.A.F. co-operated with our ground forces by raiding hostile supply centres in the Chin hills and the Myittha valley, paying particular attention to Kalewa on the River Chindwin and other places in the Kalemio area.

On October 12 the Madras Government issued an announcement of a short alert in Madras on the night of October 11-12 in the course of which a few bombs were dropped, "and very slight casualties were caused. No damage was done." Apparently only one aircraft actually crossed the coast. On the following night a lone Japanese aeroplane which approached the coast of Ceylon was caught and destroyed. These two incidents suggested that the enemy was engaged in reconnaissance rather than attack.

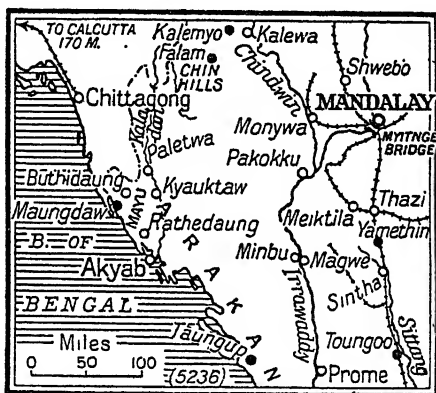
Further patrol encounters from the Arakan and Chin hills areas were announced from Delhi on October 15 and on the night of October 16 a party of British troops under cover of diversionary raids shot up Maungdaw on the Arakan front with mortars. Meanwhile the harassing of the Japanese railway and river communications was effectively carried out. The Pakokku, Thazi, Toungoo, Prome and Sagaing areas where the enemy had important concentrations of troops were attacked, as were his positions near Akyab; and his airfields at Heho, Thedaw and Meiktila in Central Burma were bombed. On several occasions Japanese troops on the move or in camp were caught and roughly handled by British and U.S. raiders. On October 26 G.H.Q., Delhi, announced that in the early hours of October 25 R.A.F. Liberators had attacked Akyab and the Rangoon Central Station which was set on fire. Japanese attempts at interception failed.

In the air the Japanese showed surprisingly little activity. They had a fairly strong air force in Burma, but during October it seldom showed itself. Occasional machines appeared above Assam or south-east Bengal, but the only attempt at a raid recorded by G.H.Q., Delhi, during the month was intercepted while making for Chittagong, and several enemy machines were probably destroyed. We lost three fighters and two pilots. The enemy's bombs mostly fell in water. The bombs did no military damage and caused few civilian casualties.

On November 1 American long-range aircraft delivered a heavy attack on the barracks at Port Blair in the Andaman Islands, which had been in Japanese hands since late March, 1942, and took the enemy completely

by surprise. Many Japanese soldiers were killed. The R.A.F. and their American allies continued their sweeps, raids and reconnaissances over Burma during November. A joint war report issued from G.H.Q., Delhi, on November 10 described twenty-four hours' activity on the whole front. It recorded the following operations, offensive and defensive :

On the night of November 9-10 Wellingtons bombed the Heho aerodrome, hitting the runways and the neighbouring barracks. During the following day fighters continued their attacks on the Japanese river communications, set three steamers on fire on the Mandalay water-front and



ARAKAN

scored hits on other river craft. Three launches were hit during sweeps on the Arakan coast and dive-bombers attacked hostile positions among the Chin hills. On the previous day, this bulletin recorded, Japanese escorted bombers had attacked our forward airfields near Imphal, Manipur. Two were shot down, one by our fighters, one by A.A. fire. Little damage was caused, but there were civilian casualties.

Before dawn on November 12 enemy reconnaissance aircraft approached Ceylon and the neighbourhood of Madras by moonlight. One was shot down and another damaged. No bombs were dropped. On the previous day the enemy made an ineffective raid on one of our forward aerodromes. The railway workshops at Insein near Rangoon were heavily bombed on the night of November 11-12 by the R.A.F. Dive-bombing of

Japanese forward positions in Arakan and in the Kalemmyo area on the Chindwin was reported on several occasions in November and seems to have been effective. A large number of small river craft were shot up on various occasions and some were destroyed. Unfortunately the immense abundance of timber in Burma made it fairly easy for the Japanese to replace such losses as they had thus incurred.

The new South-East Asia Command, henceforth referred to as "S.E.A.C.," issued its first official announcement from Delhi on November 19, reporting

"continuous attacks on Burma" by Allied air forces during the past week, which attacks were concentrated "against airfields, supply-dumps and concentrations in southern Burma." Heavy U.S. bombers "attacked the enemy communications centre at Pyinmana, half-way between Rangoon and Mandalay." Dive-bombers had raided the enemy's positions in Arakan and R.A.F. fighters damaged seven locomotives in offensive sweeps along the two railways running northwards from Mandalay and attacked towns, supply dumps and bridges. A ferry was sunk by the R.A.F. on the Chindwin and other river-craft were damaged. All these operations cost the Allies but one machine.

The next report of the new Command issued on December 1 stated that the port of Rangoon, by which most of the enemy's military supplies reached him, had been the main target of heavy attacks for several days. The 10th U.S.A.A.F., for the first time attacking Rangoon with fighter cover, had struck the heaviest blows so far delivered in this theatre on docks, shipping and railway communications. For once in a way the Japanese went up in some strength to attack the raiders and at least 14 of their machines were shot down. The daylight attacks, which were especially heavy on November 27 and 28, were on each occasion followed up by R.A.F. Wellingtons and Liberators after nightfall. The statement added interesting information concerning aerial and ground activities in northern Burma.

R.A.F. fighters, in sweeps along the Chindwin, left four steamers in flames and another sinking. Fighters and fighter-bombers continued their bombing and machine-gunning attacks on enemy-occupied positions and villages in the Chin hills, where "patrol activity, involving occasional clashes with the enemy, continued." A party of Gurkhas raided enemy positions in the Kalemmyo area, inflicting casualties.

In the Hukawng Valley, the report added, the enemy was making strenu-

ous efforts to dislodge advanced units of American-trained Chinese troops who were "covering the Ledo Road project." U.S. fighters had supported the Chinese by attacking Japanese positions and lines of communication. All these operations had cost the Allies eight aircraft.

The Hukawng (or Hukwaung) Valley was described¹ as "the hunting ground of the Kachin levies" who gave the Japanese outposts great trouble in this region and hindered the northward movement of troops and supplies from Myitkyina. It lay south of Hkamti-Long, nearly the most northerly district of Burma, where a British force still held Fort Hertz.

On December 5 the Japanese retorted with a daylight raid on Calcutta. They were met by fighters and heavy A.A. fire, and two were certainly and four "probably" destroyed. It was the enemy's first daylight attack on Calcutta. Little damage was done, but there were some 500 civilian casualties, about a third of them fatal. Many civilians were obviously caught unprepared after almost a year's freedom from raids, and too many stayed in the streets to watch the attack.

The next announcement by the S.E.A.C. was made on December 8. It recorded further activity on the ground and in the air.

The Allied Air Forces had "maintained their attacks by day and night" against objectives in southern Burma. The R.A.F. had bombed Rangoon and Prome, the 10th U.S.A.A.F. had raided Insein and Akyab. Fifteen Japanese fighters had been shot down during the daylight attacks on these last two places. Airfields at Heho and near Rangoon had been bombed. Chatham Island in the Andamans had received a surprise visit from Allied long-range bombers. In Arakan there had been sharp skirmishes in the forward areas. In northern Burma the Japanese strengthened their pressure against the Chinese troops covering the Ledo² Road, but without much success. From all these operations 12 Allied aircraft were missing. The enemy lost 18 machines during the week.

The constant raids of the Allied squadrons soon goaded the Japanese into fresh counter-attacks by air. During

¹ The Special Correspondent of *The Times* at Delhi, *loc. cit.* December 28.

² The new road into China started from the Ledo railhead in Assam. Work began in December, 1942. The country confronting the engineers was desperately difficult, mountainous, heavily forested, soaked by terrific monsoon rains, feverish on the low ground. The project was directed by Major-General Stilwell, Commander-in-Chief of the American forces in Burma, India and China. The engineering and supply side were in charge of Brigadier-General Raymond Wheeler. The tactical protection of the road was assigned to Brigadier-General Hayden Boatner, Chief of Staff to the Chinese forces in India. The project had been shrouded in such official secrecy that the question whether it was wise to draw widespread attention to it was asked by the Special Correspondent of *The Times* (*loc. cit.* Dec. 9).

the week ending on December 15 they attacked Fort Hertz and also attempted to intercept Allied air transport on the "China ferry route." Both attacks failed in their object. The enemy inflicted only slight damage and few casualties on the ground, and lost at least 15 aircraft to intercepting fighters. On December 21 the S.E.A.C. issued its fifth report, which began :

"In the first long-range raid since the formation of the Eastern Air Command, heavy Allied bombers attacked objectives in Bangkok on the night of December 19-20. A strong formation of U.S. bombers raided the docks while the R.A.F. raided the arsenal area." The report added that widespread attacks had been carried out by the R.A.F. by night and the U.S.A.A.F. by day in southern Burma. On December 15 U.S. heavy and medium bombers had hit oil installations at Chauk and Yenangyaung, starting great fires. R.A.F. fighters had made many successful attacks on rail, road and river traffic. In northern Burma U.S. fighter-bombers had intensified their activities against Japanese positions and supply dumps in the jungle and had carried out "daily bombing and strafing in the Hukawng valley." All these operations had cost the Allies but one aircraft.

On December 23 a further announcement from Delhi recorded a spirited and successful local attack on the enemy by Gurkhas in the Tiddim region among the Chin hills on December 22. On the Arakan front Japanese troops had attacked "a famous line regiment" at dawn and were beaten off, leaving 24 dead. Several successful patrol encounters and ambushes were recorded from Falam in the Chin hills and from the Hukawng Valley during the following week. Here the ground troops received much assistance from R.A.F. dive-bombers in the Chin hills and from United States fighters and fighter-bombers which bombed and strafed targets in the Hukawng valley for three days, starting on December 22. There was another raid on Bangkok. The S.E.A.C. report of December 26 stated that the city

"was attacked again on the night of December 23-24 by a large formation of heavy United States bombers and by heavies of the R.A.F. The United States aircraft concentrated on the railway terminus, scoring many hits, while the R.A.F. divided its attack between these targets and the arsenal area." These operations cost the Allies two aircraft.

The Japanese counter was more costly. It took the form of an attack on the Chittagong area by fighter-escorted bombers on the morning of December 26. The enemy did little damage and lost six machines to our fighters and another to A.A. fire. Four more were damaged.

The last report issued by the S.E.A.C. on December 31

recorded further aerial attacks on northern Burma, where three enemy aircraft were destroyed on Christmas Day, raids on southern Burma by day and night, the destruction of a Japanese aeroplane by U.S. fighter-bombers during their attack on Myitkyina airfield and dive-bombing of hostile positions in the Mayu Peninsula from Boxing Day to December 30. East of the Mayu range where our troops had improved their line by a small advance, "Japanese forces counter-attacked strongly. These counter-attacks were all repulsed and heavy casualties resulted." Two of our aircraft were missing from these operations. The enemy lost eight in air combats. Almost at the time of the issue of the report, the Japanese attempted an attack on the Arakan coast with a fairly strong force of escorted bombers. The attack was intercepted by the R.A.F. Three fighters and eight bombers were shot down, two fighters collided and were destroyed, and other aircraft were damaged. The R.A.F. suffered no loss. It was a promising ending to the year.

The following were the losses in combat of Japanese and Allied (R.A.F. and U.S.A.A.F.) aircraft over Burma and India during the period October 1 to December 31, 1943

		<i>Japanese</i>	<i>Allies</i>
October	....	1	11
November	...	21	13
December	....	57	22
		<hr/>	<hr/>
Total	....	79	46
		<hr/>	<hr/>

Several important military appointments may now be recorded. Admiral Mountbatten, who had arrived in Delhi on October 7 on his way to Chungking (*q.v.* Section 2 of this chapter), made immediate contact with the principal British and American commanders in this area, including Admiral Somerville, the C.-in-C. of the Eastern Fleet, General Stratemeyer, commanding the United States ground forces in China, Burma and India, Lieut.-General Morris, C.G.S. India, Lieut.-General Stilwell and that very distinguished American soldier, Lieut.-General Brehon Somervell, Commanding-General of the U.S. Army Service Forces, who had just arrived

from Washington. He also had a number of talks with the Viceroy and General Auchinleck. On October 16 it was announced that Lieut.-General Sir Harry Pownall, who was in command in Persia and Iraq, had been appointed "Chief of Staff to the Supreme Allied Commander, South-East Asia Command (Lord Louis Mountbatten)," and that Major-General A. C. Wedemeyer, United States Army, had been appointed Deputy Chief of Staff.

On December 19 Admiral Mountbatten published an order uniting all combat units of the R.A.F. and the U.S.A.A.F. in the South-East Asia theatre into a single Allied air force under the command of Air Chief Marshal Sir Richard Peirse as Air Officer Commanding-in-Chief, South-East Asia Command.

It was announced that initially all combat units of the 10th U.S.A.A.F. and of the R.A.F. Bengal Command would be integrated into one force known as the Eastern Air Command under Major-General G. E. Stratemeyer, who was designated as second in command to the A.O.C.-in-C. The Eastern Air Force would be composed of a tactical air force under the operational control of Air Marshal Sir John Baldwin, who had been commander of the Bengal Air Command, and a strategical air force under the operational control of Brigadier-General Howard Davidson, who had commanded the 10th U.S.A.A.F.

On December 27 was announced the appointment of Lieut.-General Sir Wilfrid Lindsell as principal administrative officer, India Command. His task, it was explained, was to make India a great military base for Admiral Mountbatten's offensive against Japan. His remarkable services, first as Q.M.G. of the British Expeditionary Force in France, and later in the Libyan campaign as Q.M.G. of the Eighth Army,¹ made him an ideal choice for a difficult and complex task.

A fair amount of news reached India of developments in Burma. The Japanese had granted Burma "independence" on August 1, and went through the comedy of appointing an Ambassador, Renzo Suwada, in Rangoon, and it was admitted that this had had some effect on the Burmese townsman who was not worried by the fact that the Cabinet contained a Minister of Co-operation

¹Cf. *The Fourteenth Quarter*, pp. 24, 25.

whose sole duty was to see that Japanese wishes were carried out by his colleagues. After disbanding the "Independence Army," which had been chiefly occupied in massacring Indians in the campaign of 1942, the Japanese began to form a voluntarily enlisted "Burma National Army." Its soldiers wore the national peacock badge on its tunics and frequently paraded. The force certainly had some value for propaganda purposes. Its military utility was conjectural. Attempts to form a "Sweat Army," or National Labour Force, were not appreciated. The cruelty that marked Japanese punishments startled some Burmans, but it is questionable whether such acts as the boiling to death of a brigand shocked the public as much as it would have shocked the majority of Indians or Europeans. Attempts to win Buddhist support were largely neutralized by the gross disrespect shown for shrines and pagodas by the invaders and their addiction to robbery, their violence when drunk, and their indifference to public health save in towns garrisoned by their soldiers.

"To sum up," wrote a correspondent of *The Times* (*loc. cit.* December 14), "the Japanese have the prestige of their military success and the force of their Pan-Asiatic propaganda behind their political strategy. Against them they have the impracticability in the existing circumstances of solving the economic problems of the country and their own inability, partly psychological and partly due to inexperience, to administer . . . in such a way as to win the esteem and confidence of the people. Against the British there is a certain amount of nationalist feeling with a racial tinge, and our record, so far, of military disasters in Asia. For us there is our proved ability to bring prosperity, order and justice to the country, and to maintain it, and this weighs heavily with the Burman. The lessons of this balance-sheet are obvious. The racial sentiment which for the moment favours the Japanese and militates against us will diminish as the manifest fraud which is Japanese Pan-Asian propaganda becomes increasingly apparent. But Japanese military prestige will persist until serious and permanent defeats are administered to the Japanese forces."

2 : CHINA AND JAPAN

It was not until late November that the Japanese showed any dangerous activity in China. Early in October they made one of their periodical sweeps south of the Yangtze in the area where the provinces of Anhwei, Chekiang and Kiangsu border on one another, with the

object, it appeared, of preventing Chinese regulars and partisans from gathering in sufficient strength in this area to harass the invaders in the triangle formed by the cities of Nanking, Shanghai and Hangchow. They seem to have taken the city of Kwangteh, 85 miles south-east of Nanking, but they did not remain there long.

On October 8, the Chinese Foreign Minister, Mr. T. V. Soong, paid a brief visit to Delhi on his return from Washington to Chungking and met Admiral Lord Louis Mountbatten and General Stilwell there. On October 16 Admiral Mountbatten visited Chungking and remained there five days, returning to India on October 21.

"He had long conferences with General Chiang Kai-shek at the General's country bungalow in the heart of the Szechuan hills . . ." He spent two nights there after being the guest of General Ho Ying-ching, the War Minister. "Most of the time [during his visit] was spent in conferences, which were attended by General Stilwell, Commander-in-Chief, U.S. Ground Forces, Burma, India and China. Some of the talks were attended by Major-General Gordon Grimsdale, head of the British military mission at Chungking, Major-General Stratemeyer" (q.v., Section 1 of this chapter), Major-General Brehon Somerville and the principal officers of the Chinese High Command.¹ The talks were understood to have been very successful.

It was not, however, possible to "step up" the delivery of arms, munitions, and other war material to China by air to an extent that would permit the Chinese armies to undertake any important offensive operations. But it was possible to send fuel, spare parts of aircraft and aircraft in crates to China from India in steadily increasing quantities, and by the end of the quarter the 14th U.S.A.A.F. was reasonably well provided and the long-starved Chinese Air Force was beginning to receive the material which it had needed so sorely and so long. This reinforcement soon made itself felt. The Americans were able to drop heavier bomb loads and to venture further afield, as the following outline of their operations indicates.

On October 1 and 7 American bombers raided Haiphong in French Indo-China and did considerable damage to the power plant. They returned to the attack on October 12. On October 26 they dropped 55 tons of bombs on the marshalling yards at Haiphong and on the same day attacked Japanese shipping off Hainan Island in the morning and afternoon. One transport of 300 feet in length and two 250 feet tankers were sunk and

¹ Reuter message from Chungking, dated October 21.

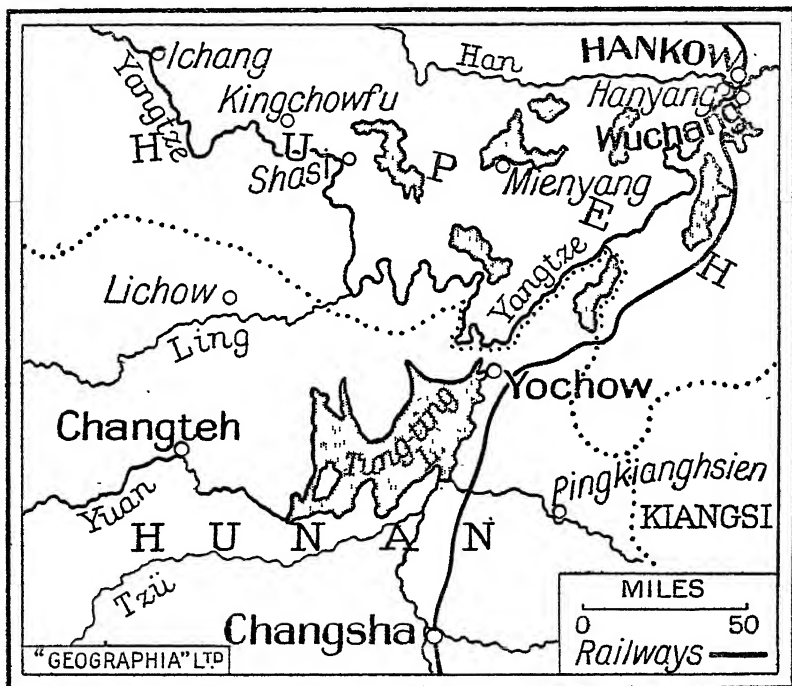
a freighter was damaged in the first attack. In the second two enemy fighters were shot down. Only one American bomber was lost in this operation. On October 29 Liberators bombed a large zinc smelting plant at Quangyen near Haiphong, dropping 40 tons of bombs. Other bombers attacked the jetties, shore installations and aerodrome at the Japanese-occupied French port of Fort Bayard, Kwangchow leased territory, in Kwangtung Province, and also bombed the barracks and sank a freighter on October 28 and 29. The destruction of a locomotive and a train south of Kiukiang in Kiangsi Province was another useful stroke, and on October 29 Liberators dropped four tons of bombs on Japanese troops at Mengshei on the Yunnan section of the Burma Road. All the U.S. aircraft returned safely from these encounters.

On November 7 American aircraft made a low-level attack on shipping in Amoy harbour on the southern entrance to the Formosa Straits and claimed to have left five ships, a destroyer among them, in a sinking condition. On November 8 they raided Kiungshan airfield on Hainan Island, destroying four and damaging more of the 30 aircraft on the field. They suffered no loss in either operation. Meanwhile more "Sky Dragons" supported the Chinese troops operating in the extreme north of Burma (q.v. Section 1). On the night of November 15-16 Liberators raided ships and the Kowloon dock area in Hong Kong. During the 15th, Mitchell bombers made several attacks on shipping and docks at Fort Bayard. On November 16 the Liberators attacked Hong Kong by daylight, dropping 27 tons from a high level. Mitchells followed up with a low-level attack and sank a cargo steamer estimated at 11,000 tons and two small ships. On the same day an aerodrome north-west of Hanoi was raided, also without loss. Other Mitchells bombed Swatow aerodrome and strafed the dockyard area, while Mitchells and Lightnings supported Chinese troops in the Tungting Lake region and also strafed river craft conveying Japanese cavalry across the Yangtze. On November 26 American and Chinese aircraft raided Shinchiku aerodrome in Formosa.

By this time the Japanese had opened a really serious campaign against the "rice-bowl" district around Changsha, the richest region south of the Yangtze. They had previously mounted an offensive in the west of Hupeh Province and had cleared the country south of Shasi on the Yangtze after some fighting in which they were accused of using gas. This done, they advanced against the town of Changteh, some 30 miles west of the Tungting Lake. The Chinese, who realized the importance of the town which lay on the "rice-road" to Chungking and was connected by road with Changsha, which had so often defied the enemy, made a most gallant defence. Their 57th Division, barely 3,000 strong,¹ was ordered to hold out to the last, and they obeyed their orders to the letter. The attack began on November 21. By November 23 the Japanese had surrounded the city, and two

¹ Chinese Divisions seldom exceeded this strength.

days later they fought their way in. Five days of fierce street fighting followed, in which the Chinese, resisting from house to house against odds of five to one, were gradually killed out. Only 300 succeeded in breaking out, but the Division had gained precious time and on December 13 when the ruins passed into Japanese hands



THE "RICE BOWL"

Chinese troops were threatening the enemy's communications with Shasi and with Yochow on the Yangtze, and American aircraft were aiding them. The Japanese force pressing down from Yochow was held.

By December 4 the advance upon Changsha had come to a standstill. After several days' indecisive fighting around Changteh and the town of Taoyuan, 15 miles to the west, which had been taken by the enemy

after a heavy air raid supported by parachutists on November 21, the Japanese retreated northwards. Aided by American air attacks, the Chinese reoccupied the ruins of Changteh on December 9 and retook Taoyuan next day. Both cities had been reduced to ruins and the Chinese admitted that their losses had been heavier than the enemy's, but they had foiled a dangerous offensive and had reopened the "rice-road" to Chungking. Nor did they rest content with having repulsed the Japanese. By December 13 they had retaken Shihmen, 40 miles north-west of Changteh, and had advanced over 20 miles along the Yochow road. A demonstration by Chinese troops, aided by U.S. aircraft, in the direction of Wuchang, one of the three cities which form the great city complex of Hankow, may have helped to decide the Japanese against persisting in their offensive. The Chinese, apparently advancing from the south-east, had reached a point 30 miles from Wuchang on December 5, and although they did not make much further progress, they cut the communications between Wuchang and Yochow and did much damage to the railway.

An official statement from General Stilwell's headquarters said that on the night of December 9-10 Mitchells of 14th U.S.A.A.F. had bombed the Wuchang and Hankow aerodromes besides attacking the enemy near Changteh. On December 10 Liberators had attacked the railway yards and warehouses at Hanoi in French Indo-China, dropping ten tons of bombs and doing much damage. Fighter-bombers had also assisted Chinese troops on the Salween front. Here there had been much small-scale fighting since the end of October, but the Japanese, although they crossed the Salween on more than one occasion, seem to have been probing and reconnoitring rather than attacking the strong Chinese positions.

The Cairo Conference at which President Chiang Kai-shek met President Roosevelt and Mr. Churchill has already been dealt with (Chapter I, Section 3), and it remains to make a few references to Chinese internal affairs. On October 10 General Chiang Kai-shek inaugurated his three-year term as President and took the following oath, which was administered by Mr. Wu Chih-hui, an octogenarian member of the Kuomintang :

"I, Chiang Chung-ching [Chung-ching is a "courtesy name"] sincerely and solemnly swear that I will comply with the teachings of Dr. Sun Yat-sen, that I will work for the consummation of the people's principles, that

I will abide by the laws of the nation, that I will loyally execute my duties, that I will endeavour to regain our lost territory, that I will endeavour to enhance the welfare of the people, and that I will submit to the sanction of the law in the event of violation of my oath."

The President afterwards received the diplomatic corps and broadcast a message to the nation in which he said that his policy was to advance constitutional government at home, to defeat Japanese aggression and to co-operate with the Allies. On the following day President Roosevelt sent a message to Congress asking it to repeal the Chinese Exclusion Act, and to allow Chinese residents in the United States to become American citizens.

"By the repeal of the exclusion law," he said, "we can correct a historic mistake and silence the distorted propaganda of Japan. While it would give the Chinese a preferred status over certain other oriental peoples, their great contribution to the cause of decency and freedom entitles them to such preference. . . ."

He renewed the promise that China would receive substantial aid as soon as possible, aid not only in the form of weapons and supplies, but also in carrying out the plans already laid for offensive and effective action. A good prelude to the Cairo meeting.

On October 20 the Belgian Ambassador and the Foreign Minister, Dr. T. V. Soong, signed a treaty whereby Belgium relinquished extra-territorial rights in China, all special rights in the international settlements of Amoy and Shanghai, rights under the final protocol of Peking, and rights relating to inland navigation and coastal trade. On October 27 the Turkish Legation was raised to the rank of an Embassy. A Chinese good will mission, led by Dr. Wang Shih-chieh, a former Minister of Education, arrived in London on December 3 to return the visit of the British Parliamentary Mission in the winter of 1942-43. On December 17 Lieutenant-General A. Carton de Wiart, Mr. Churchill's special military representative with General Chiang Kai-shek, arrived at Chungking.

News from Japan was scanty. On October 8 General Tojo took over the Ministry of Commerce and Industry and the Minister of Communications was dismissed. On October 26 the General informed the Diet that in spite of Marshal Badoglio's shameless treachery, the Axis was still

sure of victory and Japan was dealing shrewd blows at the United States and Great Britain which were "lashing out blindly in a counter-offensive." He added that Germany was now

poised to put her new plan of free and untrammelled military operations in all directions into execution and that "taking advantage of her strong and solid position in Europe" she would bring Britain and the United States to their knees "in full collaboration with Japan." Of the Russian campaign he seems to have said no word. He also expressed sympathy with the plight of the Indian people, and on the following day the Foreign Minister embroidered on this text by describing the war as one of "liberation to defend East Asia" against colonial exploitation. This was for the Diet, an obedient body, and the public, but to correct any tendency towards undue optimism the Emperor, in a rescript to the House of Peers, described the situation as "truly serious" and urged the people to display their might and destroy "the evil ambitions" of enemy nations. A later broadcast by General Tojo urged the nation to take the situation seriously. "We must renew our determination, thoroughly remould our life in wartime . . . consolidate our position to meet a protracted war and thus make the third year the year of decision." He described the Declaration at the Cairo Conference as childish propaganda, and he claimed brilliant victories on Bougainville, in the Gilbert Islands and in China, but, he added, "The officers and men of our imperial forces do not, of course, entertain any hope of returning alive,"¹ which may have damped the spirits of his less fanatical listeners.

This broadcast was delivered on December 8. Four days later a review of the war broadcast from Tokyo admitted that

"the enemy has gradually advanced his bases to Bougainville and the Gilbert Islands and is step by step closing in on our strategic points." In spite of his defeats he was "advancing most persistently." The situation had a grave aspect, the review continued. "The material fighting strength of which the enemy himself boasts and in which he takes pride . . . is not to be slighted : and it is limitless. . . . That the enemy has sent aircraft over the Marshall Islands, west of the Gilbert Islands, depicts the growing gravity of the war situation. The Imperial Navy continues to gain victories in separate battles, but even if this is the case it cannot be said that the Japanese Navy has the situation under complete control."

American comment on the review which was communicated to the Ministry of War Information was that the enemy was taking a far more serious view of the situation than he had yet done. The review ended with an exhortation for still greater efforts by every individual, and especially for the greater and quicker production of aircraft, a significant close.

¹ *B.I.N.*, Vol. xx, No. 26, p. 1141.

3 : THE SOUTH-WEST PACIFIC

A. NEW GUINEA AND INDONESIA

The chief features of the war in the South-west Pacific region during the last quarter of 1943 were the increasing speed and strength of Allied blows by land, sea and air and the increasing weakness of the enemy's counter-strokes. There had been long intervals between each Allied advance. Guadalcanal was cleared of Japanese by February 9, but it was not until the end of June that the Americans were in a position to attack the enemy's strongholds in New Georgia and the neighbouring islands. In New Guinea, after the fall of the strongholds of Buna, Gona and Sanananda, the last of which was captured by January 21, landings near Salamaua were not effected until the last days of June, and a large-scale descent on Lae waited until September 4. During the last quarter of 1943 American (and New Zealand) expeditionary forces landed on the Treasury Islands, Bougainville, and two points in New Britain; they had raided Choiseul Island; and they had seized Makin and Tarawa atolls in the Gilberts, an exploit which, though performed outside the strict limits of the area, had a great influence on the development of operations in the Solomons, New Britain and New Guinea.

The Japanese had already experienced increasing difficulty in reinforcing and supplying their troops in all these islands, in consequence of the superior strength of the Americans at sea and the superior quality of the Allied air squadrons. They now found themselves committed to what they least desired, a war of attrition waged with decreasing means against increasing hostile forces. They sought to make up for their losses of transports and cargo-ships by the use of barges which could be rapidly constructed and moved from point to point on the coasts of New Guinea and New Britain, and from one to another of the Solomon Islands. At first they were able to reinforce and supply threatened points by this means, moving the barges chiefly by night and hiding them by day in coves and creeks.

This expedient, however, could only be employed locally and coastally, and when the Allies had discovered it they were able to inflict heavy losses on these flotillas of barges by attacks from the air or raids by small surface craft. In the air, in spite of many defeats, the Japanese still contrived to maintain their strength, flying large numbers of aircraft from one island airfield to another. But even here it was plain that when fresh fronts were opened against them in Burma or elsewhere the strain on their resources would increase unless and until they could regain the initiative by a naval victory. But when even the invasion of the Gilbert Islands failed to tempt their battle-fleet to fight a major action it could only be inferred that their naval losses, although no doubt exaggerated, had been sufficiently heavy to deter them from taking any further risks on blue water. The great decrease in the scale of their naval counter-attacks gave further evidence of their losses. They had used battle-ships, aircraft carriers and large cruisers in most of the actions off Guadalcanal. During the last quarter of the year they seem to have risked nothing heavier than light cruisers against the Americans, and some of their rare interventions at sea were carried out by destroyers alone. All these developments gave the Allies heartening evidence that the initiative was in their hands and that they could now force their stubborn opponents to conform to their moves.

In New Guinea Finschafen was taken by Australian troops on October 2 after 11 days' fighting. Meanwhile Australian troops were advancing up the Markham Valley; and their progress and the entry of Allied forces into the valley of the Ramu River after the capture of the pass between the two watersheds threatened to outflank the enemy's coastal positions between Finschafen and Madang. But the Japanese who had been driven out of Finschafen were still strongly established in the rough group of hills known as the Sattelberg, some six miles to the north-west. They seem to have been joined there by reinforcements arriving from the west too late to save Finschafen but in time to attempt its recapture;

and they were in wireless touch with their forces further west. They received some further reinforcements by barge from their coastal garrisons, and it soon became evident that they would not be content to stand on the defensive in the Sattelberg position but would strike back at Finschafen, aiming especially at Scarlet Beach, where the 9th Australian Division had landed on September 21. On November 16 the Special Correspondent of *The Times* at A.H.Q., Australia (*loc. cit.* November 17), stated in a review of the military situation on this particular front :

"The Japanese counter-attack developed on October 16 along the road from Sattelberg east to the coast. In the following week there was some of the hardest fighting which has yet taken place in New Guinea. Hurling battalion after battalion forward regardless of losses, the Japanese drove through to the coast, and for five days isolated our forces in the Scarlet Beach area. On October 17 two or three bargeloads of Japanese landed on the beach before dawn, but we successfully dealt with them. The situation, although grim . . . was never out of hand. The Australians fought doggedly, and were aided in the later stages by reinforcements."

The Scarlet Beach position was cramped and the troops occupying it were kept in their slit trenches not only by the Japanese fire, which was continuous and heavy, but also by the knowledge that any weakening of the front to avoid the losses caused by mortar and artillery fire might enable the enemy to make a fatal lodgement in the position. The defence, admirably conducted by Major-General Wootton, who had succeeded General Morshead in the command of the 9th Division and had previously commanded the brigade which captured Buna and Sanananda, was successful. On October 21 the tide began to turn "when the Japanese found it impossible to maintain their positions on the coast," which had received abundant attention from Allied aircraft.

"During the next few days, although they made frequent and suicidal frontal attacks, they withdrew more than three miles inland towards Sattelberg. The closeness of the fighting may be gauged from the fact that at one stage Bofors and 25-pounders were firing point-blank at the Japanese positions in the *kunai* grass. Our sick and wounded at the main dressing station at Scarlet Beach had to be evacuated by barge under fire."

The retreat marked the close of the second stage of the Finschafen campaign. The Japanese still preferred to stand and fight rather than risk a difficult retreat through broken country, and they fought most obstinately. They occupied steep, rocky, jungle-clad hills, or rather mountains, 3,000 feet above sea-level. On November 18 the Australians, helped by Marauder and Mitchell aircraft, were within a mile of the Sattelberg, but eight days' gruelling fighting were needed before the highest points

of the ridge were in their hands. Of its capture the Special Correspondent of *The Times* wrote (*loc. cit.* November 29) :

"The capture . . . is perhaps the most remarkable feat of arms performed by the Australians in New Guinea. . . . At every turn the precipitous terrain favoured the defenders and troops can rarely have occupied such excellent natural positions as the Japanese held. . . . The Australian drive . . . was three-pronged. The big thrust, made by infantry working in close co-operation with Matilda tanks, followed the main track leading up to Sattelberg from the coast. On both flanks other units pressed forward, some from the south and some from the east. In the central sector the tanks were unable to operate in the last two days of the attack, November 24 and 25, owing to landslides on the track, but the infantry continued to work their way forward."

The Japanese were well dug in and counter-attacked frequently with vigour. The approaches to their positions were tracks often along razor-backed ridges with cliffs on each side which were swept by the enemy's fire. Fortunately for the attackers the Japanese were less skilled in the use of their artillery than in their handling of machine-guns and automatic rifles. They used their few 70 mm. battalion guns and 75 mm. mountain guns "almost as snipers' weapons, firing a few rounds at close range, if possible over open sights, and then whipping them away quickly." They also seem to have been short of mortar ammunition, owing, no doubt, to the difficulty of bringing up sufficient supplies from the northern coast of the Huon Peninsula, through tracks in the jungle and under frequent air attack.

On November 24 some of the Australian forward positions seemed to have become untenable and a slight withdrawal had been ordered when an enterprising sergeant asked for permission to hold on for another 20 minutes and succeeded in outflanking a Japanese machine-gun battery which had held up the advance. That night the Australians expected a counter-attack. It did not come, and the patrols which advanced next morning after a violent bombardment of the ridge found the enemy gone.

The victors owed much to their aircraft and their gunners, who in eight days hurled over 12,500 shells at the Japanese positions, a small number by European or North African standards but a record for the South-West Pacific. The modified form of the 25-pounder which they used and called the "baby 25" proved an excellent weapon and did great credit to the ballistic experts of the Commonwealth who designed it. The arrival of large numbers of barges from America which enabled the army to change from overland and air transport, and the remarkable skill shown by the American engineers in building roads through the forests were other factors of their success. The Japanese lost heavily. Between October 17 and October 22, 510 dead had been found near Finschafen, and it was believed that fully 800 more

had been killed, most of whom were left on the ground, in the struggle for the Sattelberg. Most of their small number of guns were captured. Great praise was deservedly won by a small Australian force which got astride the main Japanese line of communications from Sattelberg to the coast during the Sattelberg fighting. Though cooped up in a position 150 yards wide at most, subjected to shell and mortar fire at under 1,000 yards range, supplied only by air and repeatedly attacked by day and night, it held its own for eight days and killed 184 Japanese before being relieved. The enemy now retreated through Wareo village, six miles north of the Sattelberg towards Bonga, five miles north of Scarlet Beach, through which they had received supplies by barge. But the Australians took Bonga on November 30, beat counter-attacks back near Wareo, and took the village after hard fighting on December 8. While they went forward through most difficult country, American motor torpedo-boats continued to play havoc with the enemy's barges on this coast and in the Vitiaz Straits, by which he was attempting either to supply or to evacuate his retreating troops. On December 15 the Australians took Lakona after a day's hard fighting. This is a village on the coast six miles north of the Song River, which was the northern boundary of the Australian position at the time of the original landing near Finschafen.¹ The Japanese had used it for landing supplies for the Sattelberg force. The Special Correspondent of *The Times* telegraphed (*loc. cit.* December 20) :

"Our infantry have pressed steadily up the coast supported by tanks and artillery. The chief feature of the operations has continued to be our strong shell-fire.

While the Japanese have fought stubbornly, as they have done from the start . . . they have not been very skilful or successful and their losses have been heavy. Between November 30 and December 11, 343 Japanese dead have been counted and since then many more have been killed. Our own losses have been light.² After crossing the Sanga River, north of

¹ The Japanese attempt to recapture Finschafen had compelled the Australians to abandon this line and concentrate round Finschafen.

² The Australian Army Minister stated on November 9 that between September 5 and October 23 there had been 1,996 Australian casualties at Lae, Salamaua and Finschafen, of whom 1,414 were wounded. The balance were killed, missing or had died of wounds.

Lakona, our troops cornered some Japanese in a pocket formed by the river and the sea. Thirty Japanese were killed and the rest jumped over the coral cliffs into the sea.

Inland an Australian force has pressed northward from Wareo which was occupied on December 8. Here the densely covered and precipitous terrain has been exceptionally difficult and progress has been slower."

Next day the Australians captured five abandoned guns, three of 75 mm., with mortars, flame-throwers and machine-guns on the coast, while the discovery of 15 Japanese who seemed to have died of starvation only two miles inland spoke eloquently of the breakdown of the enemy's supplies. By the end of the year the Australians had advanced between 22 and 25 miles along the coast north-westward of Finschafen, had killed several score more Japanese in a number of skirmishes, had captured Waringai village, where the enemy had been landing supplies from coast-creeping barges, and had found evidence that the Japanese had lost many dead from an epidemic of dysentery. A few naval operations were reported from the northern coast of New Guinea during the quarter. No enemy surface ships appear to have been encountered by Allied naval craft except the barges, which suffered heavily from attacks by U.S. motor torpedo-boats. On the night of November 28 light naval craft shelled Sio harbour, 40 miles north of Finschafen, a stage for hostile barge traffic. On December 1 A.H.Q. reported the bombardment of Madang by "Allied warships." The U.S. destroyer *Perkins* was sunk by collision off the New Guinea coast on November 29.

During these coastal operations the Allied Air Forces had maintained their ascendancy over the Japanese. The enemy made feeble air attacks on Finschafen and Morobe in early October, but Allied Mitchells and Marauders bombed Alexishafen aerodrome near Madang on October 16, and hostile aircraft raiding Finschafen left five bombers and a fighter behind. Other Japanese aircraft which had raided Oro Bay on October 15 and 16 had fared worse. They were intercepted by Airacobras and Lightnings, and fights ensued from sea-level to 2,000 feet.

"Our fighters shot down 26 enemy bombers and 20 fighters and probably destroyed 11 others. Not one bomber escaped. Seven fighters which had

fled . . . were pursued to the coast of New Britain and two were shot down. We lost no aircraft and suffered no damage to our shipping or installations." Next day, while one force of our bombers was raiding Alexishafen, another, composed of Mitchells, attacked Wewak from a low level, dive-bombing and strafing the airfield and beating off 30 intercepting Zeros for the loss of one machine, and another raid on Oro Bay cost the enemy 24 more machines. Several other Japanese failures were reported during the month, the most ambitious, an attack by at least 12 bombers with 20 fighters which tried to bomb a coastal convoy and to drop supplies for the Sattelberg force, being dispersed with the certain loss of 12 machines against a single Allied fighter, though the U.S. Airacobras and Kittyhawks were outnumbered by two to one.

Nor were Japanese diversions by air against the troops attacking the Sattelberg during November any more successful. The American and Australian pilots struck several sharp blows at concentrations on the Wewak and Madang airfields and the experiment, which was being tried at the same time in Europe, of mounting a 75-mm. cannon in the nose proved extremely successful. There were fewer Japanese counter-raids by air in early December when shipping was attacked off the Japanese-occupied coasts of New Guinea and Wewak and Madang were harassed. On December 20, however, Japanese aircraft, 20 strong in each case, raided our aerodromes on Goodenough Island and Kiriwina in the Trobriands, which, like the first-named island, lie off the northern coast of the "tail" of New Guinea.

In general, however, the experience of the last two months of the quarter in this, as in other parts of the South-West Pacific area, gave the impression that the Japanese Air Force had lost much of its quality. The Allies had better machines and their superior mechanical equipment had enabled them to construct several new aerodromes north of the Owen Stanley Range with surprising speed. But these advantages did not alone explain why for some time past the ratio of Allied to Japanese losses in air combats had been as low as one to five, at times even one to six. On November 28 Lieut.-General Kenny, Commander of the Allied Air Forces in the area, said :

"I am satisfied that the Japanese does not give his personnel nearly as much training as we do. He just sends them out and if he loses them there are plenty more. The Japanese can produce second-rate flyers in unlimited numbers. If he kills five of them to bring down one of our bombers he considers he is still ahead in the game." The Japanese pilots, he concluded, were now second-rate and would probably remain so.

Neither American nor Australian airmen had any respect for the Japanese. The execution of Americans who had taken part in the Tokyo raid had infuriated the people of the United States. The Australian Air Force

was presented with a good cause of bitter anger in the early days of October.

The examination of the diary of a Japanese soldier, presumably killed at Salamaua where it was found, revealed a painful story of Japanese barbarity. It described how one of the two members of the crew of a Douglas shot down by A.A. fire was brought to Salamaua under guard of a *tai* (unit), the commander of which "told us that it had been decided to execute him. He was to have a Samurai's death, so the commanding officer of the *tai* would decapitate him with his favourite sword." The narrator then described how all assembled to witness the execution. The lorry with the prisoner arrived. The unit commander, the chief surgeon, and the H.Q. platoon commander came out. The prisoner, who appeared composed, was taken to the place of execution. The narrative continued :

"Komai, the *tai* commander, faces the prisoner and says 'You are to die. I am going to kill you with this Japanese sword according to the Samurai code.' When the *tai* commander says he will allow the captain two or three minutes to prepare for death, I hear him mumble something which sounds like 'one.' . . . The prisoner is made to sit on the brink of a bomb crater full of water. The precaution is taken of surrounding him with guards with fixed bayonets, but the prisoner remains unshaken to the last. . . .

The *tai* commander draws his favourite sword. . . . First he touches the prisoner's neck lightly with the sword. His arm muscles bulge. The prisoner closes his eyes for a second, and at once the sword sweeps down. Everybody steps forward as the head rolls on the ground. I realized that the emotion I felt just now was not personal pity but a manifestation of magnanimity that becomes a chivalrous Samurai."

The narrative concluded with another example of "magnanimity." "A seaman from the medical unit receives the sword from the surgeon. He rolls the body on its back. 'Here is something for the other day. Take that !' he says ; and with one blow he mutilates the remains. The seaman gives the body a kick, then he buries it." Next day's entry in the diary reads : "The prisoner killed yesterday was an Air Force captain or flight lieutenant from Moresby. He was a young instructor in the A.T.C. there."

The writer evidently felt that his officer had paid the prisoner a high compliment !

During these operations on the coast of the Huon Peninsula, the 7th Australian Division, commanded by Major-General G. A. Vasey, had been engaged in a parallel campaign in the valleys of the Markham and Ramu Rivers. Although the distance between the Ramu and the northern coast of New Guinea seldom exceeded

50 miles, and was less than half that total at Bogadjim, south of Madang, the intervening Finisterre Range presented so serious an obstacle to the movement of troops and transport that the two campaigns were virtually independent. At the same time the advance down the Ramu did divert the attention of Japanese aircraft which otherwise would have been, and of ground troops which might have been, available for use against the 9th Division. After units of the 7th Division had been flown to Nadzab and had begun their advance down the Markham to Lae (cf. *The Sixteenth Quarter*, Chapter V, Section 3B) other units had been left to block the valley north and north-west of Nadzab, which lies about 16 miles north-west of Lae by air. The units sent to Lae were the first Australian troops to enter it. They were then sent back to the Markham valley where air-borne troops, as previously recorded (*The Sixteenth Quarter*, *loc. cit.*), took the Kaiapit airfield, routed the Japanese in open fighting, and prepared for an advance westward into the Ramu Valley. This advance began about September 22, and on October 4 the Australians, after a few small engagements, had reached Tumpu, a grassy plain, 14 miles south of Yokopi, 30 miles south of Bogadjim and 50 miles south of Madang. Between Tumpu and Yokopi lies the formidable barrier constituted by the westward extension of the Finisterre Range, a "14 mile stretch . . . mountainous and serrated by precipitous valleys."¹ As soon as they had entered the foothills the Australians found the enemy in strength, and on October 12 the Japanese launched a heavy attack, which was beaten off with slight loss to the defence. The enemy then retired up the Tumpu-Yokopi trail.

Now began a difficult period of mountain campaigning in which Australian "independent units," formations composed of picked and specially trained men of the type found in the commandos in this country, did excellent work as they had already done at Kaiapit and elsewhere in Papua. The enemy held strong positions and his aircraft made several unsuccessful raids on our positions

¹ The Special Correspondent of *The Times*, *loc. cit.* October 28.

at Tumpu and Gusap down the Ramu Valley, where we had constructed an airfield. The Japanese came from two airfields at Alexishafen, 35 miles north of Madang, which they had only used as staging points for several months.

On December 13 heavy shelling of the Australian forward positions was reported and frequent patrol activity. Allied Headquarters announced that Australian horsed cavalry was advancing along the floor of the Ramu Valley where it had been for some time in action and had engaged in skirmishes in particularly suitable country. On December 22 it was stated that the Australians had reoccupied positions north-west of Tumpu which Japanese counter-attacks had forced them to evacuate during the previous week. Airacobras led by Boomerang Army Co-operation aeroplanes had wrecked seven barges on the coast and had dropped 28 tons of bombs on the Alexishafen airfields.

It was not until December 25 that the Australians scored an important success in the Finisterre Mountains. This was the capture of a mountain facetiously called "the Pimple" which dominated the line on a feature known as "Shaggy Ridge," six miles north of Tumpu and had given the enemy a most valuable point for observation. The attack, which was carried out on December 27, was "preceded by a heavy artillery barrage . . . and by dive-bombing attacks by American Kittyhawks and R.A.A.F. Boomerangs. . . . The troops had to advance in single file along a steep razor-backed ridge and up the steep exposed slopes of the Pimple. . . . From the Pimple the Japanese had a clear observation of our movements from a height of 4,800 feet and their spotters were a constant menace. The Australians can now direct their artillery . . . on the enemy's lines of communication along the Mintjim Valley. They can overlook Tumpu, can observe the coastal movements at Bogadjim, and on a clear day they can see Madang, 35 miles to the north. . . ."

During the quarter Allied long-range aircraft had made numerous attacks on enemy bases, shipping, petroleum refineries and stores and other military targets in the Dutch East Indies. Not all these operations can be described here, but the following stood out :

On October 9 Liberators made their fourth raid on Macassar in Celebes, a "round trip" of 2,500 miles, hit warehouses and fuel tanks and returned unscathed. On October 11 they destroyed a tanker at Fakfak, Dutch New Guinea, and did damage at Ambon. Attacks on Timor and the Aru Islands were reported on October 17 and on October 22 the sinking of a cargo ship off the north coast of Dutch New Guinea was recorded. Pomelaa in Celebes was attacked on October 26. One Liberator was missing. It had destroyed ten out of 12 Zeros which pursued before and was making off, though badly damaged and unmanœuvrable, only to be overtaken, 500 miles from the Australian coast, by two twin-engined machines. The four survivors of her crew, two of them seriously wounded, nevertheless took their machine down to the water successfully and were rescued after drifting about in their dinghy for two days.

On November 12 A.H.Q. reported that Liberators had flown over 2,000

miles to bomb Surabaya in Java. On November 19 they announced successful attacks on shipping by Catalinas near the Dobo Islands and by Dutch-manned Mitchells, aided by Beaufighters, on a corvette which was wrecked, and a 1,500-ton cargo ship which sank off the Tenimber Islands. After this there was something of a lull west of Darwin until December 15, when a similar Dutch-Australian combination caught two 5,000-ton transports loaded with troops and equipment off Dilli in Portuguese Timor and left both on fire. A harmless attack on Allied shipping 150 miles east of Cape Wessel, north of the eastern tip of Arnhem Land, North Australia, was the sole Japanese *riposte* by air. During the last fortnight of December the only operation of note by Allied aircraft to be recorded from the "north-western sector" was a useful attack by Liberators on Amahai airfield in Ceram, an important stage on the enemy's air route from Kendari in Celebes to Wewak.¹ It seemed probable that the demands of the campaign in New Britain imposed some restriction of air activity on this flank.

While there was little news from the Philippines, and virtually none from the Dutch East Indies was published, the Portuguese Government learnt from official sources that the Japanese troops who had occupied Portuguese Timor in January 1942 (q.v. *The Tenth Quarter*, p. 114) had behaved with the grossest violence. In his address to the National Assembly at Lisbon on November 27 Dr. Salazar, the Prime Minister, said that dozens of peaceful people, priests, doctors, civil servants and others had been murdered. The Japanese had closed the wireless station at the end of May, 1942, thus isolating the colony and the invaders had refused a proposal to send an official from Macao to inquire into the situation. "The situation in Timor persists after two years of patient, slow, interminable and fruitless negotiations. We must find a solution," Dr. Salazar concluded.

B. THE SOLOMONS AND NEW BRITAIN

During the first week of October the Japanese withdrew what remained of their garrison from Kolombangara Island. For some time they had been removing men and stores by night, chiefly by barges and small craft. In the first nights of the quarter they expedited their evacuation, using large numbers of barges to convey their escaping troops to Choiseul Island. These barges, however, were detected and attacked on several occasions by

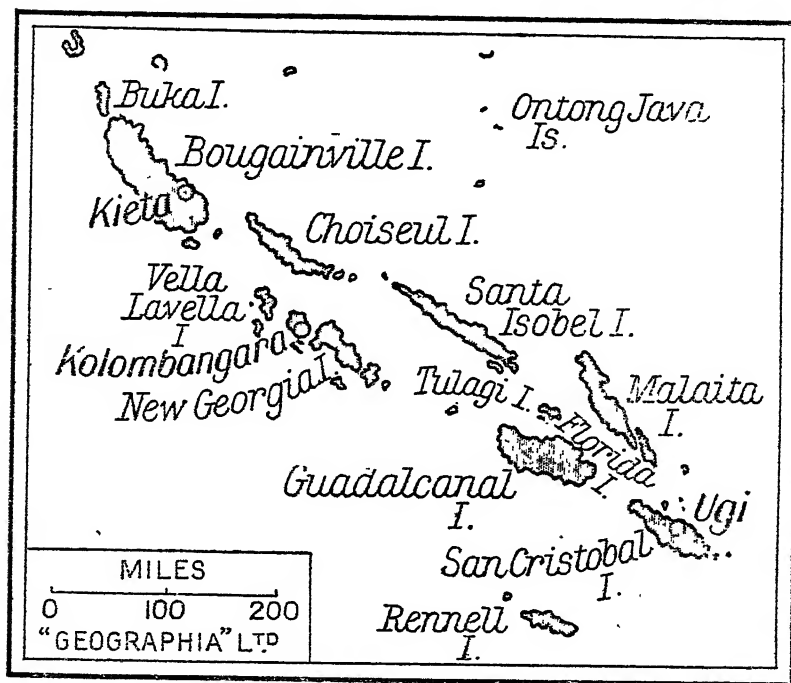
¹ Recorded by A.H.Q., Australia, December 23. The attack on shipping off Arnhem Land was recorded on December 22.

American aircraft. Some were sunk, others were strafed by machine-gun fire and a number of Japanese were thus killed or drowned before they could reach safety. Cargo ships off Bougainville Island which were, perhaps, to be used to assist the evacuation were bombed and the Americans claimed to have sunk two and an escorting destroyer on October 1, and on the following day Liberators attacked the barge depot at Kakasa on Choiseul Island with good effect. That night enemy warships appearing off Kolombangara were driven off by a combined attack of American warships and aircraft, and a raid on Vila, the enemy's base in the island, was highly successful. A small gunboat was sunk, as were some 40 barges which had been concentrated to take off troops and stores. The Americans now directed the bulk of their aircraft against Vila but left a sufficient margin to deal with any naval concentrations at Buka Island to the north or Buin in the Shortland Group to the south of Bougainville Island. One such concentration was detected off Buka and several vessels, a destroyer among them, were hit.

October 6 saw the end of this island campaign. Many of the Japanese had evacuated Kolombangara. The remnant of the garrison of Vella Lavella was pinned down on the coast under shellfire by New Zealand troops of the 3rd New Zealand Division under the command of Major-General H. E. Barrowclough who had taken over from the Americans after mid-September. During the day American troops landed at Vila without opposition. They quickly spread over the island, destroying such Japanese parties as had not escaped and reporting on October 9 that no organized formations were left on Kolombangara. That night the enemy made what was presumably a naval diversion to cover the final evacuation of the garrisons of Kolombangara and Vella Lavella. It cost them dear.

On October 9 A.H.Q. announced that American warships had sunk a Japanese light cruiser and two destroyers in the Vella Gulf and that two other destroyers had been driven off during the action. The American losses were described as 'moderate.' Captain F. R. Robinson, who led the American force in this action, was warmly congratulated by Admirals

Nimitz and Halsey. The cruiser and one destroyer were sunk by gunfire, the other destroyer by a torpedo. On October 11 General MacArthur stated that all the enemy's former positions on Kolombangara were now under American control. The last remnants of the garrison had been intercepted by light naval craft while trying to escape in barges and their boats, 29 in number, were sunk. The enemy had left much equipment, including several guns and ten wrecked aeroplanes, at Vila. A later announcement made on October 14 described how the remainder of the Vella Lavella



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force had been caught between the New Zealanders and American destroyers on the night of the naval engagement while trying to escape by sea and had been crushed.

The conquest of Kolombangara, as reports from General MacArthur's Headquarters demonstrated, had been expeditiously and cheaply effected. It was estimated (October 11) that the garrison of the island had numbered about 10,000 men and that about half of these had lost their lives in attempts to escape. In a few days the Japanese had lost as many men as had fallen in five weeks' bitter fighting around Munda. The Americans had destroyed them with negligible loss to themselves. The only Japanese now left in the central Solomons were a group on Choiseul Island.

Though the campaign in the central Solomons was over, Americans and New Zealanders made ready for new island operations, while the Allied Air Forces struck heavily at Bougainville and still more heavily at New Britain. The occupation of the Trobriand and Woodlark Islands (cf. *The Fifteenth Quarter*, pp. 141-43) and the construction of airfields there together with the capture of Lae and Salamaua had given the Allies a powerful central position between the two wings of the Japanese Air Forces at Madang-Wewak and Rabaul respectively. They were thus able to concentrate first against one wing, then against the other, with their full strength and on October 12 they struck a heavy blow at Rabaul where the enemy had been building up his bomber and fighter strength again. Before this operation Liberators had made an effective attack on the airfield at Kahili on Bougainville on October 6 and had destroyed several grounded aircraft and had beaten off 30 intercepting fighters with the loss of nine of their number. These attacks were repeated and extended to the Japanese airfields and seaplane bases at Buin-Faisi, only 100 miles from the nearest American positions.

On October 12, General MacArthur reported, a surprise attack was launched against Rabaul with the object of neutralizing the stronghold. Every available aircraft was employed in this, the heaviest attack yet launched in this theatre, and the first daylight raid on Rabaul since January. The American and Australian aeroplanes taking part in the attack were numbered by hundreds and the relative proximity of their bases on Trobriand and Woodlark Islands enabled fighters to accompany and cover the bombers. Three hundred and fifty tons of bombs were dropped and 250,000 rounds of ammunition were fired. Allied aircraft claimed to have destroyed 100 Japanese aeroplanes on the ground and to have damaged 51. Of 40 Japanese fighters which intervened, 26 were shot down. Thus 177 aircraft, or 60 per cent of the enemy's estimated air strength in the Rabaul area, were permanently or temporarily lost to the Japanese in a two-hours' action.

Their losses on the water were no less important. The Allied airmen claimed to have sunk or disabled three destroyers, two medium-sized merchantmen, 43 small sea-going ships and 70 harbour craft. They damaged a submarine tender, a destroyer tender and a merchantman and caused further damage to harbour installations, supply dumps and wharves. Five only of the Allied aircraft did not return from an attack which, General MacArthur claimed, had given the United Nations definite mastery of the air over the Solomons Sea.

The day before this attack about 100 American aircraft, including Liberators, Avenger torpedo-bombers, Dauntless dive-bombers, Corsairs,

Lightnings, Airacobras and Kittyhawks had raided Kahili in order to prevent the aircraft stationed there from reinforcing Rabaul next day, which they might otherwise have done. The objective was achieved. Of 25 Japanese aircraft which tried to intercept the oncoming raiders 12 were destroyed and much damage was done on the airfield. All the American machines returned. A dozen more aircraft were destroyed on the ground and six fighters were shot down near Buin on October 15 and 16.

The next air attack on Rabaul was made on October 18. It resulted, General MacArthur reported, in the destruction of 60 more Japanese aircraft in combat and on the ground by Mitchell medium bombers. The Mitchells also claimed to have sunk a destroyer, a gunboat and a 6,000-ton cargo steamer, and to have left a corvette in flames and another large freighter apparently sinking. The Mitchells only lost three of their number. Of their attack the Special Correspondent of *The Times* said: "Their achievement in this raid was specially meritorious because to reach their target they had to fly the extreme limit of their range in bad weather and had no fighter cover. Going in at mast-height across the harbour they dropped their bombs and covered the ships with cannon-fire almost before the Japanese realized they were there. In raids on the neighbouring airfields at Rapopo and Tohera they flew at tree-top level."

Five days later the Americans once again attacked Rabaul in strength, bombing the enemy's airfields, beating off attempts at interception and punishing shipping in harbour, and they repeated the attack on October 24. Summing up General MacArthur's *communiqués* the Special Correspondent of *The Times* at A.H.Q., Australia, gave the following account of the situation before and after the attack. He said that the

"destruction of 123 enemy aircraft on the ground and in the air on Saturday and Sunday (October 23 and 24) and the probable destruction of a further 45 are reported to represent more than half the Japanese aerial strength at the Rabaul base. General MacArthur's announcement states that the raids 'crippled the enemy's air reinforcements which he was attempting to build up from rear areas.'" Aerial reconnaissance over Rabaul on October 19 had shown that the enemy had managed to build up his strength to over 220 aeroplanes even after the devastating raids earlier in the month which were believed to have cost him 237 aircraft. In the latest daylight attacks the Allies had used nearly 300 aircraft of various types of which all but four returned, although many were damaged. In the attack of October 23 the Allies, who dropped 105 tons of bombs, claimed the sinking of a Japanese destroyer and five coastal craft off Rabaul. On October 25 they struck their third successive blow, which was chiefly directed against Lakunai aerodrome, near Rabaul. The official report of the action stated that 58 Japanese aircraft were destroyed and 43 damaged. Of those destroyed 37 formed part of several formations of fighters, totalling 70 strong, which attempted interception and were shot to pieces, having 20 machines damaged as well as those shot down. The Liberators destroyed 21 parked aircraft and damaged 23 more. The total Japanese loss during the three attacks of aircraft was therefore estimated at 181 destroyed and 88 damaged against but five Allied aircraft.

These attacks, which were accompanied and followed by almost equally heavy raids on aerodromes on Bougainville and adjacent islands had prepared the way for fresh American and Allied landings. On October 27 American and New Zealand troops landed at dawn on the two Treasury Islands, Mono and Stirling, which guard the southern approaches to Bougainville. On the previous night American warships had shelled the coast in preparation for the landing. This encountered sporadic fire from enemy mortars on the main landing beach but this was soon silenced and the enemy retired into the interior. Allied casualties were light and it was not expected that the few hundred Japanese on these little islands—Stirling Island is only three miles long by a mile wide—could hold out long. But the close proximity of the Japanese air bases in Bougainville might have made Mono and Stirling “hot spots” for the Allied troops had it not been for the preliminary raids on Buka, Kara and Kahili aerodromes, the last two of which had been bombed by over 100 Allied aeroplanes on October 26. A message from A.H.Q. on October 31 showed that the Japanese on Mono had been driven through the jungles towards Malsi on the northern coast. One attempt by Japanese dive-bombers to intervene was frustrated by Kittyhawks and Airacobras which intercepted 25 hostile machines north of Mono and shot 12 of them down. Meanwhile American parachute troops had landed near Voza on the south-west of Choiseul Island without opposition on October 28. The enemy retired at first in the direction of Choiseul Bay, the only safe anchorage for large ships on the coast of this long and little developed island, 80 miles in length and from eight to 20 miles broad, “a maze of steep hills with little flat ground.”

These attacks had prepared the way for another and a more important operation. Choiseul was of no great importance in itself but the Japanese had a barge depot at Kakasa on the western coast; they had had a sea-plane base in Choiseul Bay and while they held the island they could deny this useful anchorage to Allied ships. The seizure of the Treasury Islands had deprived the enemy of a useful observation point only 30 miles from the south-western extremity of Bougainville and had given it to the Americans. Neither here nor, apparently, on Choiseul were there strong Japanese garrisons, but the few troops stationed in these outposts might be reinforced

by barge from Bougainville, where the enemy was understood to have a garrison at least equal to a division in strength and perhaps even stronger. The American and New Zealand forces therefore pressed energetically forward. On the night of October 28-29 they killed 12 enemy snipers who were caught within the Allied lines on Mono. They had already captured some mortar and gun positions. On November 1 they reached and took Malsi after repelling a counter-attack by night wherein 44 Japanese were killed and General MacArthur reported that only a few small hostile detachments now survived in the Mono jungles. On Choiseul Island the parachute troops pressed back the Japanese towards Choiseul Bay, destroyed a small Japanese party that had landed at Vagara, three miles south of Voza, from a large barge by night and then turned on a Japanese force holding a position at Sangigai and defeated it in a spirited little action with the loss of 72 killed. It was announced on October 30 from General MacArthur's Headquarters that Allied aircraft had sunk four Japanese small craft loaded with troops at Buin near the southern tip of Bougainville. It was not clear whether these were escaping from Mono or were reinforcing Buin.

On November 1 the Americans struck their next blow. That morning a strong force landed at Empress Augusta Bay on Bougainville, 60 miles north-west of Faisi Island, the Japanese base supplementing that at Buin, and 70 miles south of the Buka Passage at the northern extremity of the island and just over 200 miles south-east of Rabaul. The attack had been well prepared. On October 29 American aircraft had raided Vunukanau airfield in strength. They were attacked by 40 Japanese machines. The Liberators shot down nine, the escorting Lightnings accounted for 16, and 15 more were claimed as "probables." The Japanese lost 45 more aircraft in the air and on the ground against but four American machines. That night R.A.A.F. bombers followed up with an attack on Tobera aerodrome. Moreover the Japanese bases in Bougainville and the smaller adjacent islands had been so heavily pounded that on November 1 the Special Correspondent of *The Times* at A.H.Q. after recording attacks on Kara aerodrome near Buin and on Ballale in the Shortland Islands added :

"Recent photographic reconnaissance showed that the enemy has only three fighters in Ballale, one at Kara, five at Kahili and four float-planes on Faisi Island. Two months ago it was common to find over 300 aircraft at these bases."

Further, on the assumption that a counter-attack to relieve Bougainville Island was under preparation at

Rabaul, the 5th U.S.A.A.F. made a violent attack on shipping concentrated there on the afternoon of November 2. The U.S. airmen claimed to have sunk or damaged fifteen large merchantment, two tankers and four coasters, to have hit two cruisers with 1,000-lb. bombs and to have sunk three destroyers. The Japanese sent 150 fighters into action, and the Americans claimed to have shot down and destroyed 67 of them. Their own loss, nine bombers and ten fighters, was among the heaviest in any single action reported from General MacArthur's Headquarters.

At the same time the effect of all these air attacks had so far been only temporary. In every case the Japanese had been able to reinforce, within a few weeks, sometimes within a few days, of sustaining heavy losses and it was hard to believe as some did that their aircraft industry was still unable to produce more than 900 or 1,000 operational machines a month.¹ The problem before the Americans was well put by General MacArthur who said with reference to the landing on Bougainville :

"My great need is airfields. My resources are limited. I have a shortage of means to hit the Japanese. We cannot mount fighter cover as we need to, but with an airfield at Empress Augusta Bay we can put our fighter cover in range of New Britain. I have been able to neutralize Rabaul, but with my limited means I cannot keep the Japanese from syphoning in reinforcements." The General said that though he had hoped that the Japanese would bring out their battle fleet, he did not think they would do so. "But if they do I will throw everything I can at them," he said.²

While the landing on Bougainville may have surprised the Japanese garrison, the enemy's Navy and Air Force reacted at once. Japanese aircraft, though they delayed the landing for a while, were eventually beaten off with some loss ; but before dawn on November 2 a force of a dozen cruisers and destroyers, supported by aircraft, tried to reach and attack the beach-head, only to be headed off and attacked in its turn by the American cruiser and destroyer screen. No American ship was lost although several were damaged, mostly by air attack, in a fierce engagement lasting 90 minutes. After losing a cruiser and two destroyers, while other ships were heavily hit,

¹ The Chinese believed that Japanese aircraft production had reached 1,500 a month by the end of 1943.

² *The Times*, November 3.

the Japanese squadron broke off the action and made off westward in three groups. Of the enemy's aircraft 17 out of an estimated total of 67 were destroyed.

Meanwhile the American Marines of the landing force had encountered desperate resistance on two islets in Empress Augusta Bay and on Cape Torakina but elsewhere the Japanese withdrew into the interior. They left altogether 135 dead behind them. Japanese Imperial Headquarters, while for once in a way admitting the loss of three ships, claimed to have sunk six American warships in this action and later (November 9) put out a marvellous story of the sinking by naval aircraft of 15 warships, including four battleships, in a convoy "south of Bougainville Island" on November 8. Colonel Knox described these stories as absolutely unfounded. The Japanese, he told the Press on November 9, were "on a fishing expedition" to obtain information. The American troops on Bougainville quickly extended and strengthened their beach-head with strong air support from Munda, from Vila on Kolombangara and from a new airfield which had been rapidly completed at Barakoma on Vella Lavella. On November 2 and 3 Japanese air attacks were beaten off with the certain loss of 21 fighters and a bomber, and six other aircraft were listed as "probables." But new developments in the south-west Pacific now diverted attention, if only temporarily, from the fortunes of the Bougainville Island expedition. By November 3 it was known at General MacArthur's Headquarters that the Japanese were sending strongly escorted convoys from their base at Truk in the direction of New Britain, apparently with the intention either of reinforcing Rabaul or of relieving the garrison of Bougainville Island. On November 8 *The Times* published a most interesting message from its New York Correspondent describing the series of air and sea actions that arose from this attempt.

"These new engagements in force began with the dispatch by the Japanese last week from Truk, their mid-Pacific Gibraltar, of five convoys, consisting of 53 warships, mostly cruisers and destroyers, and 11 transports with reinforcements for Bougainville. . . . Apprised in good time by reconnaissance aircraft of this Japanese movement—the very thing he had hoped for since it would bring the enemy into a naval engagement against his own

much-strengthened forces—General MacArthur struck swiftly.” Bombing aeroplanes took some toll of the advancing enemy convoys, and in the engagement off the west coast of Bougainville the Americans had won a naval success that forced the enemy to give up his attempt to break up their invasion of Bougainville.

“But the Allies’ main attack was against Rabaul. It was the ninth raid . . . since October 11, when General MacArthur declared his intention of putting it completely out of action, and one of the heaviest yet made. It began with a sudden swoop of naval dive-bombers, torpedo-bombers, and fighters—some of them from aircraft carriers—on warships in the harbour. Five heavy cruisers and a light cruiser were hit by both torpedoes and bombs, a sixth heavy cruiser was hit by torpedoes, and another light cruiser was hit by bombs. One heavy cruiser was seen to blow up. The smoke of battle made it impossible to estimate accurately how much damage had been done to other warships. Seventy enemy fighters intercepted the Allied naval aircraft. Twenty-four were shot down for certain, and probably 22 others at a cost of eight Allied aircraft.”

Army heavy bombers swiftly followed up the attack and dropped 82 tons of explosives on the waterfront and other installations at Rabaul, leaving fires, exploding oil stores and munition dumps, and smoking ruins to mark their attack. They came under heavy fire from A.A. batteries and were attacked by about 20 fighters, all that the enemy could now muster, but only lost one aeroplane, an escorting Lightning, and shot down two of their opponents.

The attacks had been remarkably co-ordinated. The naval aircraft, nearly 100 Avengers, Dauntless dive-bombers and Hellcat fighters, came from General MacArthur’s right wing based on the Solomons. It was the first time that fighters from the right had been in action over Rabaul and they had given a right good account of themselves. The Army aircraft, Liberators with Lightning escort, had come from the General’s left wing and its bases in New Guinea, the Trobriands, and Woodlark Island. But the attack on Rabaul was neither the beginning nor the end of the offensive against the convoys. They were still moving southwards ; several groups were seen by American reconnoitring aircraft after the attack on the morning of November 5 which has just been described ; on the previous night Allied aircraft claimed to have sunk a cruiser south-east of Kavieng in New Ireland and Liberators had disabled a tanker and set fire to a cargo ship north of Mausau Island 160 miles north-west of Kavieng. On November 9 A.H.Q. recorded further successes.

On November 8 Allied heavy bombers raided Rapopo airfield near Rabaul at midday, dropping 84 tons of explosives, destroying 12 machines

on the ground and shooting down 23 out of 50 intercepting fighters for the loss of five machines. In the Bougainville-Buka area medium bombers sank a corvette, five small cargo vessels and two barges. Buin was heavily bombed, while a Japanese raid on American shipping off Empress Augusta Bay cost the enemy five machines and did no damage. The enemy, however, had managed to land some troops north of the American beach-head there during the night of November 6-7. These were attacked at dawn by aircraft and artillery and 150 were found dead, out of a force estimated at 700 men.

A further raid on Rabaul by over 200 aircraft from carriers in the Solomons and airfields in New Guinea was made on the night of November 10 and during the following morning. American Liberators and R.A.A.F. Beauforts bombed the airfields at night. Next morning dive-bombers and fighters from Admiral Halsey's carriers "went in mast height" dive-bombing and launching torpedoes at almost every ship in harbour. The Japanese delivered a counter-attack on the carriers and warships in the Solomons. They scored no direct hits though some damage was done by near misses, while 64 of them were brought down by fighters from the carriers or by A.A. fire. The raid on Rabaul had cost the enemy 24 aircraft and the Americans claimed the sinking of a cruiser and two destroyers and the "probable sinking" of another cruiser and 11 destroyers.

It was admittedly hard to believe that the Japanese loss of cruisers and destroyers from aircraft attack in this theatre had been as heavy as American pilots and observers claimed. If they had been sunk in such numbers no cruisers and few destroyers would have been left and American commentators on several occasions had to point out that the number of cruisers "sunk" much exceeded the number which the enemy was believed to possess. Large destroyers were doubtless mistaken for cruisers at times and there were stories of "sacrifice ships"—merchantmen tricked up to look like cruisers from the air—being deliberately exposed to attack. But if American estimates were exaggerated, the inactivity of the enemy's battle-fleet suggested that enough ships of these categories had been lost or disabled to diminish the value of the battle-fleet which could not risk action without a strong cruiser and destroyer screen.

The American naval losses during all these operations had been slight. On November 10 the Navy Department reported the loss of two destroyers in the Pacific, the *Henley*, torpedoed and sunk during October, in what part of that ocean was not stated, and the *Chevalier*, which was damaged in the night action off Vella Levella on October 6 and afterwards collided with another destroyer and sank.

There were further air attacks on enemy bases in Bougainville and on Rabaul during the last half of

November but by this time the American attack on the Gilbert Islands¹ had diverted Japanese attention to the Marshall Group and the threat to Truk and attempts to send reinforcements to Rabaul and Bougainville Island were on a smaller scale.

On Bougainville the American marines and the U.S. infantry regiments who had joined them extended their beach-head in spite of a small Japanese landing to the south of it. Heavy fighting began on November 21 and it was not until December 1 that the Japanese were finally driven from their positions on the Cipik ridge from which they had made several attacks on the beach-head. The Americans claimed to have killed 2,000 Japanese from November 1 to November 29, during which period they had themselves lost about 1,000 killed and wounded. On December 1 they found 1,200 dead Japanese on the Cipik ridge. During these operations the U.S. paratroops who had landed on Choiseul Island had been withdrawn. A *communiqué* issued on November 12 said that they had fulfilled their mission.

In spite of its preoccupations in the Gilberts the Japanese Navy did not abandon the Bougainville garrison without another struggle. On November 25 A.H.Q. reported another naval action in the northern Solomons between Rabaul and Bougainville Island. The report said that

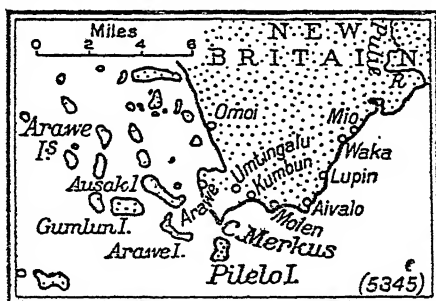
The Japanese force consisted of six destroyers in two groups. The first, of two destroyers, was attacked by American ships and both the enemy vessels were torpedoed. The remaining four ships broke away westward but were chased and three were sunk in a running fight. The Americans suffered no loss. On November 28 they reported hits on cruisers by Allied aircraft north of New Britain and on the following day they claimed the destruction with a 1,000-lb. bomb of a cruiser off New Ireland.

The stage was now set for a new American attack, this time on New Britain itself. During the first fortnight of December Allied aircraft repeatedly raided Japanese airfields at Rabaul, Gasmata on the south coast, and Cape Gloucester and had also made a number of attacks on the Arawe area, west of Cape Merkus. On December 15 an American assault force with a most powerful naval escort appeared off Cape Merkus, and attempted three separate landings. The attempt on a beach two miles east of the cape failed. The Japanese held their fire and allowed the boats to come within 50 yards of the beach before opening on them and had not a destroyer eventually intervened the whole force might have been wiped out. One man reached the beach and fell fighting. The main landing on

¹ q.v. Section 4 of this chapter.

the western side of Cape Merkus was unopposed. Another force landed on Pilelo Island, off the cape, killing 15 Japanese and suffering no loss.

The landing, said the Special Correspondent of *The Times* (*loc. cit.* December 18) was a colourful and important operation, but it was not large. The troops engaged belonged to General Kreuger's Sixth American Army. They came ashore in barges, "Alligators"—amphibious armoured vehicles which had been used in the Solomons—and "Buffaloes," an improved model of the Alligator. Both these amphibious machines are propelled through the water by the rubberized track which enables them to be used on land. They found that the small emergency airfield had not been used by the enemy, though he had used Arawe Bay and its islands as harbourage



THE ARAWE REGION

for barges and "as an anchorage for motor torpedo-boats and seaplanes." The invaders quickly consolidated their position, only encountering opposition from a few snipers, and captured three 75 mm. mountain guns with other equipment.

Though the Japanese ground troops were too weak to oppose the main American force their aircraft were active as soon as they had recovered from the preventive attacks on Gasmata, Rabaul and Cape Gloucester. On December 17 three formations of bombers and fighters were engaged by American fighter patrols who claimed nine bombers and five fighters. That night the enemy made 12 bombing and strafing attacks on the American positions. On December 18 some 25 dive-bombers with 15 escorting fighters attacked, but did no damage, thanks to the excellent American fighters, and lost nine machines. They continued their attacks, and on December 21 nearly 100 machines came over the Arawe position at different times and did some damage. They lost 16 machines, and a week later they lost 35 in a series of engagements. On the ground the Americans encountered no opposition worth mentioning until December 27 when the Japanese made three small counter-attacks and the American outposts fell back to their main position.

But by now the weight of the American attack on New Britain had been shifted to another and more important

objective. A series of attacks from the air had put the Japanese aerodrome on Cape Gloucester out of action by December 18 but the Americans continued to drop great quantities of bombs on it, and on the neighbouring camps and other targets, 414 tons on December 19 alone, and they continued these attacks almost daily until December 26 when a force of marines landed on either side of Cape Gloucester. The attack had been prepared by an exceptionally heavy bombardment by American and Australian warships, and it met with virtually no opposition on the ground. The Japanese Air Force, however, countered vigorously and a series of sharp attacks followed the landing. Fortunately the American troops were well provided with air cover and their fighters broke up one attack after another before it could reach the beach-heads and shipping and only one American warship, the destroyer *Brownson*, was sunk. Three other vessels suffered minor damage and seven aircraft were reported missing, against 25 fighters and 36 bombers on the Japanese side. Tanks and artillery were landed. The advance pressed steadily forward against increasing opposition and by nightfall on December 29 one of the two airfields was in American hands. By noon next day the Marines, after a heavy artillery and air bombardment, had carried the enemy's positions and were masters of the whole aerodrome and its second airfield. Their losses had not been heavy but nearly 1,000 Japanese had been killed, and the force holding Cape Gloucester itself had been crushed between the two arms of the attack. The capture of this valuable position, which gave the Allies command of the strategically important Vitiaz Strait, was a most acceptable New Year's gift to the United States; and the news was followed by the announcement of successful fighter sweeps over Rabaul on December 28 and 29 which had cost the enemy 35 aircraft.

4 : OTHER PACIFIC OPERATIONS

No serious operations were recorded from the Northern Pacific during the quarter. The Japanese after evacuating

Kiska contented themselves with sending a few aircraft to the Aleutians from time to time. On October 13 ten flew high over Massacre Bay, Attu Island, dropping bombs which did no damage. On two later occasions single aircraft were sighted by the Americans and driven off (October 19 and 24). They were believed to have come from the naval and air base at Paramushir (Paramushiru) in the Kuriles which American bombers had raided in September.¹ No American counter-raids were recorded until December 31 when Paramushir was bombed for the fifth time and the fogs and storms of the late autumn and early winter in these inclement regions no doubt deterred the U.S. Command from risking machines and pilots in pin-pricking operations. Paramushir is 630 miles from the nearest U.S. base and the North Pacific fogs may last a week at a time.

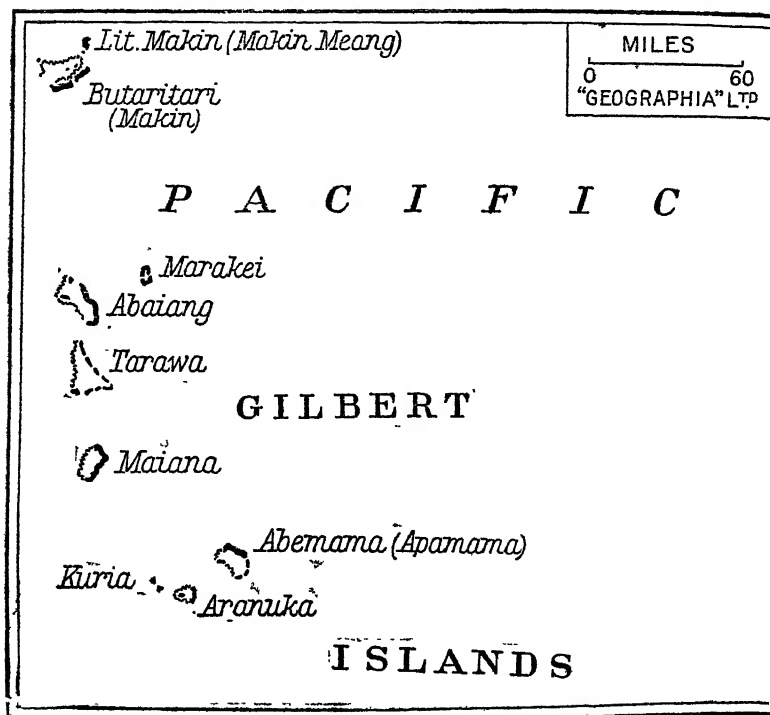
In the Central Pacific American activity increased. During the first week of October a strong force of surface ships supported by the largest number of aircraft-carriers yet employed on any one occasion in the Pacific appeared off Wake Island. The batteries and airfield were bombarded and bombed on October 4-6. The Japanese gave out that attempts to land on October 6-7 (Tokyo reckoning, October 5-6 by Atlantic reckoning) had been repulsed. There was no confirmation of this story which was of a piece with other Japanese fables and it seemed that the attack was a demonstration designed to divert the enemy's attention from other quarters. On October 14 American long-range aircraft bombed the enemy's airbase on Betio Island within the Tarawa Atoll in the Gilbert Archipelago, encountering heavy *flak* but observing no hostile aircraft.

A quiet spell followed. Then came the vigorous and successful American offensive against the Japanese strongholds in the Gilbert Islands. It was preceded by heavy air attacks on Betio airfield and on enemy bases in the Marshall Islands which lie some 200 sea miles from Makin, the northernmost of the Gilberts. On November 18 U.S. Naval H.Q. at Pearl Harbour announced the

¹ *The Sixteenth Quarter*, Chap. V, Sect. 4.

fourth and fifth successive days of raids by Army Liberator bombers on these positions in a *communiqué* which may be summarized thus :

"On November 16 U.S. aircraft repeated their raid of November 15 on the aerodrome on Jaluit, in the Marshall Islands, starting big fires, and on November 17 they attacked the Japanese air base in the Tarawa Atoll,



Gilbert Islands. On November 14 the bombers found five enemy ships at Jaluit. They bombed them and hit one which they left on fire. They also started fires in hangars, ships and the dumps of the seaplane bases at Emidj and Jabar, small islands within the Jaluit Atoll. They also bombed Mili Atoll in the Marshalls where the enemy has a good airfield. All the U.S. bombers returned safely from these operations and from those of November 13 and 14. The Japanese retaliated by raiding Funafuti Island in the Ellice group on November 17."

Any doubts the Japanese may have had as to the American intention were removed on November 19 when

after yet another day of air raids American warships joined carrier-borne aircraft in a heavy attack on the defences of Makin and Betio. Next day came the landings. That night Admiral Nimitz's headquarters at Pearl Harbour issued the following special report :

"Marine Corps and Army forces, covered by powerful units of all types of the Pacific Fleet, have established beach-heads on the Makin and Tarawa Atolls, Gilbert Islands, meeting moderate resistance on Makin and strong resistance on Tarawa. Fighting continues. During these operations Army Liberators made diversionary attacks on the Marshalls."

Next day the Admiral reported : "We have landed on Apamama Atoll. Our troops have improved their positions on Tarawa and Makin atolls but are still encountering considerable ground resistance." On November 23 he announced the fall of Makin. "On Tarawa," the *communiqué* added, "the marines have consolidated their positions and they are making good progress against enemy concentrations on the eastern end of Betio Island, with its capture assured. The situation on Apamama is well in hand. Raids are being continued against the Marshalls by carrier aircraft and 7th Army Liberators." Next day Admiral Nimitz announced the capture of Betio and the destruction of its garrison.

On November 28 the story of the extraordinarily savage and desperate fight on Betio was told in Washington and New York. No bloodier battle had been fought by the United States Marine Corps in its long history. Of the two battalions numbering over 2,000 Marines who rushed the beaches in the first assault only a few hundreds escaped death or injury and the first assault was but the prelude to more than three days' battle.

"Before the landings began," wrote the New York correspondent of *The Times* (*loc. cit.* November 29), "American battleships, cruisers and destroyers hurled 2,000 tons of shells at the island, and aircraft from carriers dropped 800 tons of bombs on the enemy's positions in a concentration of bombardment almost without parallel. But it was not enough. As the landing boats approached the beaches they were stopped by a shelf of coral reef which lay only two or three feet below the surface of the sea, reaching out in some places as far as 800 yards from the shore. The Marines had to leave their boats and wade the rest of the way. They then came under heavy fire from machine-guns, mortars, and rifles, and it was there that they fell in the greatest numbers, attacked not only from in front but also from the rear, by a group of the enemy hidden in the apparently abandoned hulk of a Japanese steamship."

On the beaches the Marines were little better off, for the Japanese had built barricades of coco-nut logs too high for tanks to climb which had to be scaled in the face of heavy fire. Behind these were pill-boxes, some made of coco-nut logs, between which layers of sand were packed, others of concrete, some even of steel and others combining all three materials. Heavy machine-guns with a wide arc of fire were posted at points of vantage and snipers in the tree-tops picked off officers.

On Makin, or rather 'on Butaritari Island within the Makin Atoll, the famous 165th (New York) Infantry Regiment were more fortunate. They had only 200 yards to wade, they were able to get tanks ashore and they were opposed by only 300 Japanese troops and 300 armed workmen. These last, however, fought most fiercely. The tanks, once ashore, were able to crush many of the pill-boxes. Others were breached by point-blank fire from 75 mm. guns and when they resisted these forms of attack engineers crawled up under cover of heavy rifle fire and thrust charges of T.N.T. through the loopholes of the pill-boxes at the end of long poles. On the second day of the attack the Japanese cornered at the eastern end of the island made a desperate counter-attack and were nearly all killed. Nine escaped to a small island only to be hunted down and killed to a man.

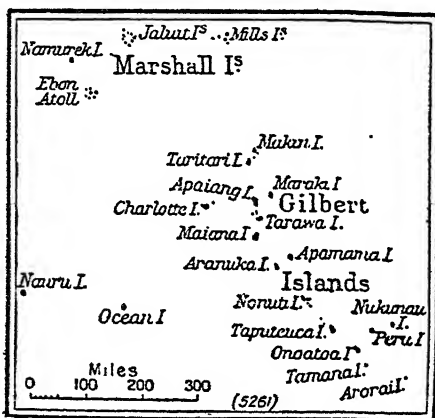
On Betio, where the Japanese by their own account had about 2,700 regular troops and 1,200 armed workmen, they showed equal courage. Scarcely any were taken prisoners. Small groups fought it out after the main body had been annihilated and the Japanese Imperial statement broadcast on December 20 to the people of Japan and to the United States (!) that the garrison "died heroically to the last man" in their final charges was true in essentials. Their commander was Rear-Admiral Kenji Shibazaki, who fell fighting. The Americans lost heavily in proportion to their numbers. A report published on December 1 by the Navy Department gave the losses at Tarawa (Betio) as 1,026 killed and 2,557 wounded. On Makin 65 were killed, including the Colonel of the 165th Regiment, and 131 were wounded. At Apamama one man was killed and two were wounded. Most of the losses at Betio were suffered by the Marines. In spite of fabulous Japanese reports of the sinking of American vessels, only one ship was lost. This was the escort carrier *Liscome Bay*, which was torpedoed by a submarine among the Gilbert Islands on November 24. Rear-Admiral Mullinix, who was on board her, and her commander, Captain Wiltsie, were reported missing in action.

Further details of the fighting published by the Navy Department on November 25 showed that the attacks on the Tarawa and Makin atolls had been most effectively covered by air attacks on the enemy. The announcement said :

"One of our carrier divisions covering the Gilbert operations on November 24 shot down 34 enemy fighters, nine bombers, and three four-engined patrol seaplanes. United States losses in these operations were

totalled three fighters and one torpedo-bomber. Seventh Air Force Liberators which raided Imicji, Jaluit atoll (in the Marshalls), on November 24, observed three airborne float-type fighters which did not attempt to intercept. One of our planes was damaged by A.A. fire. Mopping-up operations on Tarawa, Makin and Apamama are virtually complete. Few live Japanese remain in the Gilberts."

Navy construction battalions known as "Seabees" with army engineers quickly followed up the landings on the Gilberts to prepare for further action. Admiral Nimitz made it known that it was his intention to establish airfield facilities not only on Betio, where the enemy had



THE GILBERT ISLANDS

constructed a strip long enough for medium bombers, but also on Makin where they had only installed a seaplane base. It was hinted that the enemy's bases on the Marshalls, Jaluit, Mili, Wotje and Maloelap, the first two of which are only 200 miles from the Gilberts, would be heavily attacked and, it was hoped, wrested from the enemy ere long. The Americans soon had Betio airfield in working order, thus facilitating their attacks on Nauru to the west of the Gilberts and on Japanese bases in the Marshalls. The Japanese counter-raided Betio on the night of December 3-4 and attacked Makin next day but did little damage on either occasion. On December 4 the Americans made two heavy attacks on the Marshalls. In

one the largest force of Liberators yet assembled in the Central Pacific raided Mili atoll, dropping 50 tons of bombs and wrecking a bomber on the ground. In the other carrier-task forces in strength attacked the central Marshall Islands.

Their targets were the Japanese installations, airfields and shipping within the Kwajalein and Wotje atolls. They claimed to have destroyed or damaged a number of medium bombers on the ground and installations of various descriptions on Kwajalein, Ebeye, Roi and Wotje Islands. At Kwajalein they sank two cruisers, an oiler and three cargo transports and damaged other vessels here and at Wotje, with slight loss to themselves. The Japanese came out in strength to avenge the attack. "Our forces under the command of Rear-Admiral Charles A. Pownall," said the official statement, "successfully fought off vigorous and prolonged aerial and torpedo bombing attacks. Of one group of seven torpedo aeroplanes six were destroyed by anti-aircraft fire. One of our ships suffered minor damage . . ." The Americans claimed to have brought down 72 enemy aircraft in these operations.

On December 8 strong forces of the Pacific Fleet shelled Japanese positions on Nauru Island while carrier-borne aircraft bombed. Then came a lull in the operations in this area until December 19, when heavy bombers of the Seventh Army Air Force raided Maloelap atoll in the east-central Marshall Islands. They were intercepted by 25 fighters but claimed to have shot down seven and got away with but two machines damaged.

The next operation recorded in this area during the quarter was a raid by medium bombers on Nauru on December 28. Several of the American machines suffered damage but none was lost and an important ammunition dump was set ablaze by their bombs. The last operation of the year in the Central Pacific was an attack on enemy positions in the atolls of Jaluit, Kwajalein, and Mili, in which the American aircraft encountered unusually little resistance.

Throughout the quarter American submarines maintained their attacks on the Japanese mercantile marine in the Pacific, and also in Chinese and even in Japanese waters. On October 19 the Navy Department, which had published no report of sinkings of enemy shipping since September 9, announced that a large number of successful attacks on enemy ships had not been published since the

outbreak of war in order to avoid giving the enemy information which might be useful to him. The new sinkings were :

Six large tankers, 17 large cargo supply ships, 45 medium-sized cargo supply ships, three large transports, two medium-sized tankers, five small cargo supply ships and 30 miscellaneous vessels. Five more medium-sized cargo vessels were listed as "probably sunk." Damaged ships totalled 45, including four large tankers, two transports, two large cargo supply vessels, 31 medium-sized cargo supply vessels, one small cargo supply vessel and five "miscellaneous." It was not clear whether this list included the steamer *Konron* which was sunk in the Strait of Tsushima on October 5 with the loss of over 500 lives after being hit by a torpedo from a submarine.

Later announcements during the quarter were :

October 29. *Sunk* : a large cargo steamer, a large tanker, five medium-sized and two small cargo ships. *Damaged*: one large and two medium-sized cargo ships and a small cargo ship.

November 15. *Sunk* : one aeroplane transport, one large freighter, one medium cargo transport, and four medium freighters. *Damaged* : two freighters, one large, one medium-sized.

November 26. *Sunk* : a medium tanker, a medium aeroplane transport and seven medium cargo ships.

December 6. *Sunk* : a large tanker, nine medium freighters and one small freighter.

December 17. *Sunk* : two large transports, two large tankers, three medium freighters, and a small freighter. These last sinkings were in "Far Eastern waters."

December 28. *Sunk* : one destroyer, two large tankers, two medium-sized transports, one large and six medium-sized cargo ships.

The American Navy had reported three submarines missing during the quarter, all presumably in Pacific or Far Eastern waters. These were the *Dorado* (reported October 24), the *Runner* (October 27), and the *Wahoo* (December 2), bringing to 15 the total of submarines reported "presumed lost," sunk or destroyed to avoid capture since the outbreak of war.

On all the Pacific fronts, the end of 1943 found the Americans in a far stronger position than was theirs at its beginning. They now had a solid foothold in the Central Pacific where they had been occasional raiders. They had taken the greater part of the Solomons, they were in occupation of two valuable beach-heads in New Britain, with the Australians they had expelled the Japanese from a great part of northern New Guinea. They had regained the Aleutians. They had inflicted serious and probably

irreplaceable losses on the enemy's Air Force and merchant shipping. Even allowing for some exaggeration they had substantially weakened his fleet and his loss of cruisers and destroyers may well have explained his reluctance to risk his capital ships in battle. On December 30 Admiral King, Commander-in-Chief of the American Fleet, gave his impressions of the naval situation. He said :

"We are in a better position to retain . . . the initiative. We should be going along faster against Japan if we had more means. These additional means will be available with the transfer of power from the European theatre. We have done several things to lure out the Japanese fleet and we are going to do several more in an endeavour to get it out."

CHAPTER VI

THE AMERICAS

I : THE UNITED STATES

The best-selling book in the United States during 1943 was *One World*, Mr. Wendell Willkie's record of his trip to the Middle East, China and Russia in 1942. The book was expected to reach a sale of 150,000 copies. At the end of the year its sales were 1,530,000 copies. Its success was an indication of the increasing part that foreign affairs were taking in the thoughts of the public ; it also provided a reason for believing that Mr. Willkie's hold on the public mind was extensive. He had not only shown himself to be a good loser in the Presidential campaign of 1940 when, as the Republican candidate, he was defeated by President Roosevelt, he had also shown himself to be a successful loser. He remained in the limelight. In the spring of 1941 he came to England during the heavy bombing. In 1942 he made the trip that is the subject of his book. On October 27, 1942, he delivered his famous "One World" broadcast. During 1943 his book was at work for him. He had become the most famous unofficial advocate of international collaboration. The question that many Americans asked about him was whether in taking this line he had abandoned his political hopes. Could he, in the light of his campaign, have any hold on the Republican Party ?

Against this background Mr. Willkie delivered several speeches which were generally taken to be the sign that he was returning to active political work. Of his own party he said : "We Republicans must take the affirmative, eschew the negative." At Schenectady on October 13, in an address to graduates at Union College, he said : "Lately it has been the fashion among a small group of people to argue that it would be expedient to superimpose leadership from on top rather than to allow it to continue to well up from the people. The insidious argument was advanced that this course was necessary to counter 'the inability of a democracy to act quickly or effectively.' The lie to that nonsense is given by an examination of the lives of every one of you and your families. There exists in every American home that element of leadership which is and always has been the safeguard

of American democracy." Finally, he said, it depended upon the young people of America largely whether an Allied victory, which he described as the first step on a long road to permanent peace, "is merely a hiatus between two more parts of the same world war, or whether it is the first plank in a bridge on which the tired, bloody millions of the world can drag themselves to an island of hope."

Two days later—at St. Louis on October 15—Mr. Willkie said to a political gathering: "You have heard men who like to stencil other men into categories call me an internationalist. And with the word they try to give the implication that I am thereby less American. I do believe deeply in international co-operation—co-operation in order that there may be peace in the world, that we and the other Great Powers may not waste the substance of the people in building rival impregnable defences. The real foundation of peace must be economic. There is finally the fact that any plan for peace with half a chance of success must be built on a world basis. I can testify from personal observation that all the world turns to America for leadership. Therefore, tentatively, hopefully, I should like to see this country exercise its utmost qualities of leadership and moral force to bring Great Britain, Russia, China, and the United States to a point of understanding where they will make a joint declaration of intention as a preliminary to forming a common council of the United Nations and other friendly nations. Out of the practice of co-operation and out of the substance of agreement will come our only chance to realize man's hope of peace."

These were radical hopes and were not in line with a great deal of Republican sentiment. On October 1 Mr. Alfred Landon, the defeated Republican candidate of the Presidential election of 1936, had expressed several objections to "a military alliance, however temporary, with one country" as the American contribution to an enduring peace. He recognized that the United States must work towards the goal of a stable and peaceful world "without expecting to right all the wrongs of the world in one treaty." But, as the *New York Herald Tribune* pointed out on October 5, "in his insistence upon righting as many of the wrongs of the world as he deems possible, and avoiding 'the old-fashioned balance of power alliance,' he rather slurred over the concrete policy which the United States must pursue if it is to help in building and maintaining peace."

In another speech early in December Mr. Landon said in Washington that the Moscow agreements (Chapter I) were "hazy and indefinite." He also said that Governor Dewey of New York would be nominated for President by the Republicans not later than the second convention ballot and that Mr. Willkie was likely to slip almost completely out of the running before election time.

This speech brought a strong reply from Mr. Willkie. He declared on December 6 that if Mr. Landon's recent

speeches represented the thinking of the Republican Party

"someone other than myself should lead the Republicans in the 1944 Presidential campaign. For the statements, inferences and implications of the Governor's speech would take the party in a different direction from that in which, in my judgment, it must go if it is to win the confidence of the American people." Two days later Mr. Hoover, the former President, came to Mr. Landon's aid. He explained that Mr. Landon had not opposed the Moscow pact but that he "rightly objected to advance pledges by Republicans to commitments on peace settlements until those proposals are made known."

Mr. Hoover's statement was in line with one section of Republican belief that the Republican campaign of 1944 should be waged primarily on domestic issues. Mr. Landon was cheerful about his party's prospects. He declared on December 8 that the Democratic Party was split in all the 48 states of the Union over President Roosevelt. "In contrast to this," he added, "the Republican Party is united, and I am confident that it will be victorious next November."

The elections in the first week of November had shown a trend towards the Republicans. The contests were scattered and local, and they were held in an off-year when there were no elections to Congress. These contests traditionally go against the Administration, and as the President's conduct of the war was not a major issue, they were not a certain sign that in the Presidential campaign the Democratic nominee would not win. It was felt that the Republicans now had a stronger national basis than the Democrats, but that they had no leader who could hope to defeat President Roosevelt if he decided to stand for a fourth term. Within the Republican Party itself the fight was between Mr. Willkie and those who wanted to stop his drive towards nomination, and it seemed at the end of 1943 that Mr. Willkie was not being stopped. "The Republicans' best hope of victory," Mr. Walter Lippmann wrote, "is to prove that the control of the party has passed from pre-New Deal Republicans to post-New Deal Republicans. The pioneer and path-breaker in this crucial development is, of course, Mr. Wendell Willkie." Mr. Dewey was non-committal on Presidential prospects. It was understood that he wished to complete his term of

office as Governor of New York, which expired three years hence, but it was felt by many that if Mr. Dewey were pressed hard enough to take the nomination—and especially if he believed that he could win—he would enter the campaign.

When Mr. Roosevelt was asked on December 29 whether he intended to make a fourth term declaration he said that his questioner was “getting picayune.” A correspondent of the *Los Angeles Times* disagreed with the President’s view. “The entire nation would like an answer to the question ‘Is Mr. Roosevelt a candidate?’ Since the whole war effort is motivated by democratic principles and ideals such a question cannot be regarded as ‘picayune’ unless the whole nation and the war are to be shrugged off as inconsequential. In my estimation, even considering the customary coyness of politicians, the question deserves a responsive answer.” It appeared certain that if the Democrats were to win in 1944 President Roosevelt would have to be their candidate. There was no comparable figure within their ranks. But Mr. Roosevelt remained silent.

The President had had a busy time during October, November, and December. In October plans were being made for Mr. Hull’s visit to Moscow, and the five Senators came home from their world tour. On November 2 the results of Moscow were announced. Before the end of the year Mr. Roosevelt had been to Cairo and Teheran (Chapter I, Sections 3 and 4).

The five members of the United States Senate who toured the world battlefronts were Senators Mead, Russell, Brewster, Lodge and Chandler. They were impressed by the fact that British Army officers, diplomats and economic agents throughout the world “know what Britain’s post-war goal is—to preserve the Empire and its resources—and are moving towards that goal with team work and precision.” American representatives, on the other hand—the Senators said—did not know what policy the United States had, if any, and were frequently wanting in experience and team work. The Senators believed that the United States should secure the post-war right to the use of the air bases constructed out of U.S. funds and under American supervision, and sometimes by U.S. troops, and should obtain more oil during the war from British sources in the Middle East. Senator Chandler stressed his belief that General MacArthur and General Chennault had not received the air power they needed, and Senator Lodge, who had talked to both generals, expressed the opinion that a million lives would be saved in the war in the Far East if Russia would allow the United States to use its air bases to bomb Japan.

Senator Chandler declared that "the Jap is United States enemy No. 1," that a major offensive should be launched in the Pacific, and that the Administration should either give General MacArthur more support "or get rid of him." Of foreign opinion of the United States Senator Lodge said: "There seem to be two impressions. One is an expectation of gifts and favours from the United States far beyond our capacity to confer. The other is a fear of the expansion of our foreign trade and of our world-wide aviation. I was again impressed with the dangers of overstatement and of making impossible promises. I submit that a clear, frank statement of national aims, based on national interest and guided by justice, would accomplish more good for the world and cause less hatred and disillusionment later on."

Mr. Roosevelt replied to the criticism of oil supplies. He said that arrangements were being made to increase the use of petroleum from Iraq and Iran. He also said that Britain had not been hoarding her oil and that until the Mediterranean route was reopened it was a shorter haul to bring the oil from the Western Hemisphere rather than round the Cape of Good Hope.

Soon the Moscow conference put the Senators' criticisms in the shade. Three days after the results of the meeting had been announced the Senate, on November 5, passed by a vote of 85 to 5 a resolution which declared: "That the United States, acting through its constitutional processes, join with free and sovereign nations in the establishment and maintenance of international authority with power to prevent aggression and to preserve the peace of the world.

"That the Senate recognizes the necessity of there being established at the earliest possible date a general international organization based on the principle of the sovereign equality of all peace-loving states and open to membership by all such states, large and small, for the maintenance of international peace and security." Thus the Senate with overwhelming approval endorsed the post-war plan outlined at Moscow by embodying part of the text of the Moscow declaration in its own resolution and completing the task which it had approached with such care and some misgiving six months before when it began to discuss international co-operation.

On November 18 Mr. Hull gave his own account of his mission to Moscow to a joint meeting of the Senate and the House of Representatives. He received a great ovation. He declared that the conference in Moscow pointed the way to an end of the old system of alliances, and, instead, to an effective system of international co-operation for the maintenance of peace and security in the world after the war.

Of the Four Power Declaration Mr. Hull said that as its provisions were carried into effect there would no longer be need for "spheres of influence, for alliances, for balance of power or any of the other special arrangements through which, in the unhappy past, the nations strove to safeguard their security or to promote their interest." Warning his audience of the conse-

quences to the world of turning its back on international co-operation for peace, he said: "Only by carrying forward such a programme with common determination and united national support can we expect, in the long range of the future, to avoid becoming victims of destructive forces of international anarchy which, in the absence of organized international relations, will rule the world." The foundation stone of the Four Power Declaration, Mr. Hull continued, "was the principle of sovereign equality of all peace-loving States, irrespective of size and strength, as partners in a future system of general security." There was applause when Mr. Hull said that freedom of religion, speech, press and assembly were "among the most basic human rights in civilized society."

This appearance of the Secretary of State before the two Houses of Congress was without precedent. It was the first time that a member of the Cabinet had addressed Congress. While the report did not add a great deal to what was already known of the Moscow meeting, Mr. Hull's repetition of his faith in the results of the conference and his assurance that no secret agreements had been made and that none had been mentioned increased American enthusiasm for the meeting.

On Christmas Eve Mr. Roosevelt spoke of his own visits abroad. In a broadcast address to Americans at home and overseas he said: "At Cairo and Teheran we devoted ourselves not only to military matters, we devoted ourselves also to consideration of the future—to plans for the kind of world which alone can justify all the sacrifices of war."

When Mr. Roosevelt turned from foreign affairs to the home front he found a less promising situation. By the third week in December the United States was faced with the threat of a nation-wide railway strike which would have had far-reaching effects on the flow of war materials. The President acted quickly. He made plans to take the railways under Government control. Until December 22 the strike threat had involved only 350,000 operating railwaymen—engineers and firemen, for example—but on that day the non-operating employees announced that they also would strike unless their wage demands were granted.

The operating employees had originally demanded three dollars a day more in wages. They had been offered 32 cents a day, which their unions rejected. The non-operating employees had asked for an increase of \$1.60 a day. At a conference with the union leaders and representatives of the railways on December 19 Mr. Roosevelt declared that "the war

cannot wait and I cannot wait. American lives and American victory are at stake." He then gave instructions for setting up the legal machinery for taking over the railways. On December 27 the War Department, at seven o'clock in the evening, took over the railways under an order issued by the President who said: "The Government will expect every railroad man to continue at his post of duty. The major military offensives now planned must not be delayed by the interruption of vital transportation facilities."

On December 29, 18 hours before the strike was due to begin, the leaders of the three railway unions concerned went to the War Department. Soon afterwards it was announced that there would be no strike because the leaders of the unions had given an assurance that they and their organizations would take no action which would imperil the successful prosecution of the war. On December 31 the railways remained under the Army's control while the discussion of wage problems was continued.

American labour leaders at this period attracted attention from an unexpected quarter. An article in *War and the Working Class*, the Soviet paper, accused leaders of the American Federation of Labour of anti-Soviet acts which tended to suppress "hopes of the masses for national and international unity," and it referred to Mr. John L. Lewis, the president of the United Mineworkers of America, as "that Fascist sectarian."

In spite of labour troubles and other domestic issues the United States had a good account to give of its war effort during 1943. The country also showed that it intended to work even harder in 1944.

Addressing the National Association of Manufacturers on December 9, Mr. Charles E. Wilson, executive vice-chairman of the War Production Board, gave some details of what would be required during 1944 "to carry on the battle against the great fighting power of Germany and the tough, dangerous, persistent Japanese." Aircraft tonnage, up 140 per cent in 1943 over 1942, must go to 325 per cent of 1942 in 1944. Merchant shipping, now up 100 per cent, must be increased by 130 per cent in 1944. Munitions, now up 85 per cent, must go to 136 per cent in 1944. In his appeal for national unity and concentration on production Mr. Wilson said: "Too many people are trying to position themselves for the post-war period long before the country is out of danger and long before our fighting men have any chance to position themselves."

2 : LATIN AMERICA

Foreign interest in the affairs of the Latin American States was chiefly centred on the internal and foreign policy of the military and naval Junta who had seized power in Argentina in June. Only towards the end of the

quarter was it diverted to Bolivia, and this diversion was more apparent than real, since the men who led the Bolivian revolution were of the same way of thinking as the Argentine leaders, ultra-nationalist, authoritarian, and by no means well disposed to the United States. Their success justified the fear that other Latin-American Governments who had proclaimed their support of the United Nations were by no means secure against ambitious military malcontents.

In Argentina rumours that the Government contemplated a breach of diplomatic relations with the Axis were revived in late September and early October. It was known that some Ministers were in favour of this course, but most of them and of their military supporters were afraid of being accused of surrendering to foreign pressure. The offer on October 7 of the post of Ambassador in Madrid to Dr. Enrique Guíñazu, who had been Foreign Minister under President Castillo and was regarded as the embodiment of neutrality, put an end to reports of a change of policy. Dr. Guíñazu accepted the post. A Conservative, Señor Adrian Escobar, was appointed Ambassador at Washington.

In spite of much criticism of their policy, notably the well-known newspaper *La Prensa*, the majority of the members of the Cabinet were unmoved. On October 13 rumours of a Cabinet Crisis were confirmed by the resignation of three Ministers—Señor Santamarina (Finance), General Anaya (Justice) and Rear-Admiral Galindez (Public Works). The Correspondent of *The Times* at Buenos Aires explained that this was

“the climax of several weeks of tension over the breach by Argentina of her diplomatic relations with the Axis. Ever since the revolution of June 4, and especially since Admiral Storni's letter to Mr. Cordell Hull (q.v., *The Sixteenth Quarter*, Chapter VI, Section 2) . . . the Government has been divided. Several times those in favour of a breach with the Axis have come near to success, notably in recent days, but each time their failure has been attributed to opposition by a majority of military opinion. General Diego Mason, Minister of Agriculture, was believed to be in favour of the breach, if unanimity were obtained, whereas General Farrell, now Vice-President and also War Minister, and General Alberto Gilbert, Minister of the Interior and acting Foreign Minister, are both regarded as decided opponents of such action.”¹

¹*Loc. cit.* October 15.

On October 14 the Government ordered the closure of all Buenos Aires newspapers published in Yiddish, the bastard German with an infusion of Hebrew words used by large numbers of East European Jews. They contended that newspapers published in "rare languages" could not be censored easily and that the existence of newspapers in foreign languages was contrary to the Government's policy of strict nationalism. The first contention was vitiated by the publication in Buenos Aires of newspapers published in Magyar, Danish, Arabic and Japanese, which could hardly be described as "common" languages in Argentina. On October 15, President Roosevelt at his Press conference, while admitting that the matter was one which primarily concerned the Argentine Government and people, expressed his concern at the introduction of anti-Semitic legislation in a South American State. On the same day the prohibition of Yiddish newspapers was cancelled.

During these days the activities of the Government were so contradictory as to inspire the Correspondent of *The Times* to telegraph (*loc. cit.* October 18) :

"During the last 48 hours the Argentine Government have denounced and repudiated the declaration of democracy and Pan-American solidarity signed by 150 representative Argentines and published in the chief Buenos Aires newspapers on October 15 ; they have dismissed from their posts all Government servants who signed the declaration ; have lifted the ban on newspapers published in Russian or Yiddish ; have banned two American films and suspended one newspaper for two days ; and have appealed repeatedly to the Argentine people by wireless not to listen to nor repeat rumours." He added that the censorship had unexpectedly allowed the Press to publish President Roosevelt's denunciation of the ban on the Yiddish newspapers, and had equally unexpectedly allowed newspapers to publish the declaration of democracy and Pan-American solidarity referred to above and had then penalized, not the Press, but the signatories.

The places of the Ministers who had resigned were filled by Señor Ameghino (Finance), Naval Captain Ricardo Yago (Public Works) and Dr. Gustavo Zuviria (Justice and Education), a novelist and a devout Catholic. On October 22 General Alberto Gilbert was appointed Foreign Minister. His place as Minister of the Interior was filled by General Luis Perlinger. Two days later came news of the suppression of several Jewish Welfare Societies and Masonic lodges in the Province of

Entre Rios,¹ where Colonel Ramirez, the President's brother, was "interventor" or Federal Commissioner. Resignations of high officials, e.g. the Under-Secretary of Finance and the Director of Customs, were reported. A students' strike was followed by the resignations of the President and Vice-President of the University of La Plata, who were justly aggrieved by the arrest or deportation of several prominent professors. A ban on the conversational use of foreign languages by officials in office hours in the Province of Mendoza, the order that no official there should hold sentiments contrary to the Government's policy of neutrality, a drastic intensification of the censorship and the closing of the premises of the Fighting French Committee on account of the arrest of two men for painting anti-Axis slogans on the walls, and other manifestations of the Government's repressive home policy were recorded in November and December. Finally, on December 31, the Government announced that they had decided to dissolve all political parties.²

In Brazil President Vargas, who had exercised virtually dictatorial powers since the proclamation of the "new State," celebrated its sixth anniversary on November 11 by an address to a mass meeting of workmen in which he promised after the war to

"readjust the political structure of the nation in an atmosphere of peace and order, with the greatest guarantees for the freedom of opinion." The Government would "resort to the necessary consultation of the Brazilian people," and would give preference in the representation of the nation "to the organized classes of workers—employers, workmen, business men, and farmers." The "leading positions of direction and control" would be given to "the producers and workers." The public was left to wonder whether some form of socialism or a de-odorized Fascism was in the President's mind.

Brazilian military preparations were actively pressed during the quarter, and it was believed that an expeditionary force was being prepared for oversea service.

¹ It was not stated whether these lodges were of the "Scottish" Rite or were connected with the Grand Orients of Mediterranean Europe, which had no connexion with British Masonry.

² In spite of these eccentricities of policy evidence of the country's material prosperity was afforded by the transfer of Argentine gold to the value of about £50,000,000 from the Federal Reserve Bank, New York, to Argentina.

On November 29 three new destroyers were commissioned in the presence of the President, and two destroyers and a submarine chaser were launched. Several Axis agents were arrested on charges of sabotage and of causing the death of over 1,000 Brazilians at sea by communicating the movements of merchantmen to the German naval attaché, who in turn informed the German Admiralty and the submarines at sea.

On November 27 it was announced that the Republic of Colombia had recognized the existence of "a state of belligerency" between itself and Germany, an act which was warmly commended by Mr. Cordell Hull. On December 4 Bolivia, an inland country, declared war on all the Axis nations. A few days earlier the Bolivian Congress in secret session had adopted all the principles of the Atlantic Charter by an overwhelming majority. Nevertheless on December 20 a revolution backed by the younger army officers and the right-wing political party called the *Movimiento Nacionalista Revolucionario* overthrew General Penaranda, the President, after some hours of street fighting at La Paz. The President was exiled with other prominent persons to Chile.

The revolutionary leader, Señor Victor Paz Estensoro, broadcast to the nation after the capture of the Presidential Palace announcing the end of "a regime of political and economic oppression." The Revolutionary Committee also announced that the new Government would respect the international situation and would support the United Nations against the Axis. A new Government was speedily formed. Major Gualberto Villaroel was President. The portfolios of Foreign Affairs, Finance, Interior and Defence were held by Señor José Tamayo, Señor Estensoro, Señor Alberto Taborga, and Major José Pinto respectively. Señor Augusto Céspedes, secretary-general of the revolutionary committee, became secretary-general to the new Government.

Although the new Bolivian Government announced through their envoys abroad that they would stand by their country's international undertakings, opinion in the United States and in several of the Latin American Republics was highly suspicious of their intentions. Mr. Hull, when asked whether the State Department would recognize them, replied that the decision

must await determination whether "outside influences unfriendly to the Allied cause" had played a part in the *coup d'état*. Dr. Alberto Guani,

President of the Advisory Committee for the political defence of the Western Hemisphere and also Vice-President of Uruguay, informed the State Department and the Governments of other American States that the Committee had resolved to recommend to the countries of the Western hemisphere which had declared war on all or any of the Axis Powers or had broken off relations with them that for the duration of the war they should not recognize Governments set up by forcible means without prior consultation with one another.¹

Well-informed American observers acquainted with Bolivian conditions were of opinion that the revolution had more support among the *intelligentsia* and middle-class than the military movement in Argentina, which it otherwise much resembled. Its leader, Señor Estensoro, was openly unfriendly to foreign capital and strongly nationalist. He had recently visited General Ramirez "A native brand of Fascism" was a frequent description of the movement.

The Mexican war effort in the field of production became increasingly valuable to the Allies. On October 4 Mexican Embassy officials at Washington suggested that negotiations concerning the expropriated oil properties in Mexico were on foot in London. Interested British circles declined comment.

The offer of the Mexican Government for a resumption of the foreign debt service became effective in October. It reduced the capital of holders to a quarter of its original amount and their income suffered still more. The Council of Foreign Bondholders recorded their strong disapproval of some of the principles underlying the plan which had been drawn up by the Mexican Government in agreement with the International Committee of Bankers in Mexico. But they were "unable to recommend bondholders to refuse the offer."

On November 1 the Mexican military attaché in Washington who had just returned from North Africa stated that three companies of Mexicans were fighting with the Fifth Army in the ranks of the 36th Division and two companies of tank and armoured car units with the British. As they flew the national flag it was to be presumed that they were Mexican citizens and not United States citizens of Mexican extraction.

¹ *The Times*, Washington message, *loc. cit.*, December 29.

CHAPTER VII

GERMANY FORESEES THE TWELFTH HOUR

By J. H. Freeman

THE closing quarter of 1943 brought in Germany the most concentrated propaganda ever directed against a people in peace or war. The High Command's own appraisal of the military prospects at this stage will not be revealed until later, but if we may judge from the clamant appeals made to the nation we shall probably not be far wrong in supposing that the period was one of much perplexity and perturbation for the army and party leaders. Not only what was said but also what was done was most significant. Hitler met the party leaders ; there were mass meetings throughout the land to rally and reinforce the will for endurance ; and back-sliding party members and defeatists were threatened with the shortest shrift. It would be dangerous to under-rate the meaning of the mood which had been engendered in Germany as the year drew to its close.

Its salient features may be shortly summarized. For Germany the course of the war was consistently and progressively unfavourable. The news from the Eastern front was of unending retreat, and the development, in such violent contrast to the Führer's own promises, was not made any more palatable by the official explanation given to the public that withdrawal in Russia was the direct outcome of the Italian defection. The Eastern war, however, was still a long way off. Of immediate concern was the Anglo-American air offensive, the spread and weight of which were the more marked because of the absence of that comparable retaliation which the Germans had so often been assured was in preparation. It was little consolation to the citizens of devastated German cities to be told by the official news agency (as they were in December) that fear of the coming retaliation

had seized the people of Great Britain and that 200,000 persons had already been taken to concentration camps in an effort to stay the spread of panic! Even gullible Germans were less impressed by such a story than by the admission made by the Berlin wireless late in October that 2,000,000 rooms in homes had been destroyed by the Allied bombing attacks. Göring's own apologia as commander-in-chief of the *Luftwaffe* that the raids had come as a surprise to him because he had always worked to "humanize warfare" was little better. The war, clearly, was not going to accord to plan. It was not surprising, therefore, that when Hitler addressed National-Socialist veterans at Munich on November 8, in commemoration of the *Putsch* of 1923, the tone and tenour of his speech differed markedly from his past orations there.

He repeated the old fable that the German collapse in 1918 was "due less to force of arms than to destructive propaganda." After a reference to the new situation brought about by the Italian defection and a sneer that the race to the Brenner had become a very slow crawl, he described the struggle in Russia as the hardest the German people had ever known. The enemy, however, would not attain his ultimate aim. "The last battle will be decisive, and the German people will win it," Hitler said. At a time when the German people were making heavy sacrifices "we shall not be scared of calling to order other nations who are not ready to make such sacrifices themselves."¹ Nor would they shrink from handing over for summary execution the few hundred criminals they had at home. There were still some scoundrels about, but "when we catch one he loses his head."

Hitler agreed that the sufferings of the people under bombing were enormous, and, characteristically, claimed that the damage to their industries and towns was of no importance at all. They would rebuild them more beautifully than ever before. All the houses destroyed would be made good in two or three years. "Let the gentlemen over there believe it or not, the hour of retaliation will come," Hitler said. "America at the moment may still be too far away from us, but there is one country almost at our doorstep, and it is this country with which we will deal." He went on to claim that he had prepared for a five-year war. "However long this war lasts we shall never capitulate. We shall not give in at the eleventh hour. We shall go on fighting past 12 o'clock." Hitler ended with an invocation of Providence. He was, he said, a profoundly religious man. In the last war the people lost faith, and Providence scourged them, and justly so. To-day a repetition of such weakness was impossible.

Hitler in the same speech emphasized the harmonious relationship between himself and his generals and between

¹ Some doubt has been expressed whether Hitler was referring in this connexion to the satellites or to slackers among the Germans. In the official text of the speech the words used were *andere Menschen*—literally, other people.

the party and the army. This may have been intended as a refutation of foreign reports of dissension in Germany over the conduct particularly of the Russian campaign. General Dittmar, the commentator who is believed to speak the mind of the High Command, went out of his way to refer to Hitler as "this unique personality" and to say that it would be "presumptuous" to inquire into the grounds of Hitler's faith in final victory. General Dietl, who was brought from the frozen desolation of Northern Finland to address meetings in the harassed Reich, said at Munich, "The two pillars of the State are the *Wehrmacht* and the party, and the two are inseparably united." This insistence on the unity of army and party was interesting also for its bearing on the internal situation. Hitler's statement that any defeatists would be summarily dealt with was no empty threat. At a meeting of party leaders early in October Himmler, now enjoying unprecedented powers of life and death, gave an assurance that enemies of the State would get no mercy. Himmler, as his grisly record proved only too well, meant what he said. What also clearly emerged was that no distinction was to be drawn between the sufferings and the sacrifices of the civilians and those of the Services. This may have been designed to stiffen the home front at a time when bombing and "disengagement," as the retreat from Russia was euphemistically called, were having an effect on the spirit of endurance. The consequences of defeat were depicted in the blackest tones. There could be no going back. "The bridges have been burned behind us," Hitler told party leaders in October. "The only way left to us is the way forward." The *Völkischer Beobachter*, writing of the Russian-British-American conference in Moscow, said that the three countries had

"embarked on the annihilation of the Reich in execution of a common master plan." The official news agency, more specific but in the same strain, warned Germans that at Teheran the three Powers had agreed to deport 10,000,000 Germans to Russia and that in Moscow a detailed plan was drawn up for parcelling out German industry among the Allies. Blended with these dire prospects went the inevitable assurances that all would be well if Germany held out and that in any case Germany had the means to hold out. Goebbels showed all his old adroitness as apologist and advocate of the current propaganda. A selection of his statements may be appended :

What happened in 1918 was a tragic and unique event in our history and will not be repeated.

It is unfair to see only what has happened. What might have happened has also to be considered.

In Russia the *Wehrmacht* has sufficient defensive power to tie down militant Bolshevism far from the German borders.

Since it is impossible for every German to commit suicide so as to remove the fear the British have of us, nothing remains but to defend our country and our lives.

Nothing but Germany's military potential remains for Europe's protection against the East. If this wall were burst Europe would be lost.

The picture of Germany in the fourth quarter of 1943 would not be complete without reference to the new emphasis put on the prospects of an Allied invasion of Western Europe. Earlier the disposition of the propagandists had been to dismiss the possibility of a major landing as out of the question. Hitler himself, recalling the nine-hour raid on Dieppe, had with his usual heavy sarcasm assured the Reich that any attempted assault on the *Festung Europa* would not last even so long. Now the note changed. There were good reasons for the change. The retreat from Russia was not to be explained solely by the necessity to send divisions into Italy and the Balkans. Germany was required in addition to look to her defences all the way from the North Cape to the Pyrenees and from there to the French and Italian Riviera. Germans—and anyone else who cared to listen—were told of the strength of the Atlantic Wall built with such surpassing cunning and foresight by the Todt Organization and garrisoned by seasoned troops. Field-Marshal Rommel, fresh from the campaign which lost the Axis North Africa, was publicized on his spectacular tour of the fortifications, which, significantly, included those of Denmark also. Ribbentrop, the now almost defunct Foreign Minister of Hitler's Reich—once presented as the second Bismarck—broke his silence on the anniversary (December 11) of the Axis Pact to make this reference to the Allied preparations for an invasion from the West:

The enemy say that there will soon be a general attack on Europe and East Asia. Our reply is, "Let them come." We are on our guard, and will give them a warm welcome. . . . The High Command remains completely unmoved by this hysterical babble; for the Führer has erected fortifications on all the Atlantic coasts of gigantic dimensions without parallel in history. In them stands a garrison which waits with fanatical eagerness for the

moment when it will at last confront the enemy and get to grips with him. To get out of the blind alley where their strategy has led them our enemies have concentrated on a new type of warfare, typical of their mentality. It consists on the one hand in the cowardly bombing of civilians, and, on the other, in propaganda fireworks.

These confident assurances notwithstanding, the German people were summoned to new efforts and further sacrifices. Boys of 16 were required to register for service. Men between the ages of 50 and 54 were reminded that when they changed their address the authorities must be notified—a clear intimation that they would be wanted for the war factories. The industrial workers were asked to produce more. Civilians were called on to share more of the burden of total war. The intensive propaganda was not without effect. Germans as a whole responded to the appeal. There was no visible break in the national unity. Notably, the miners increased the output of coal, and so-called *Panzer* shifts were worked—that is, the men worked extra shifts without pay. In fact, the situation of isolation and peril in which Germans now found themselves evoked that fanatical and tragic quality native to them. Yet the inherent weakness was there. It showed itself in what the High Command and the party hierarchy called “defensive” strategy. This was not confined merely to the military field. In their bearing towards the remaining neutrals the German leaders also adopted a passive and accommodating policy in strange contrast to their earlier roughshod behaviour. A case in point was the reaction to the Portuguese concession to Great Britain of facilities in the Azores—a most important advantage to the Allies in the unceasing war on the U-boat. The Wilhelmstrasse protested vigorously, but no action followed. A second case was the sharp denunciation by the Swedish Government of the German decision to deport the students of the University of Oslo. Again the German reply was no more than abusive. Against the general background of the war these might seem trivial affairs, but they testified to the passing of the day when Germany could command and, in the event of defiance to her will, could enforce her orders. In short, German power had passed its peak.

CHAPTER VIII

VICTIMS, ACCOMPLICES AND NEUTRALS

I : PLANS FOR RELIEF

In an earlier volume of this series¹ the writer has recorded the submission by the United States Government to the Governments of the United Nations of a draft agreement for the establishment of the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration (U.N.R.R.A.). The text of the draft was modified after consultation with the other Governments concerned, and on November 9 the agreement was signed at Washington by the representatives of 44 States, either of the United Nations or in association with them. The signing of the agreement was followed immediately by the first meeting of "Unrra" at Atlantic City, which closed on December 1. Important decisions on relief and rehabilitation were taken in the course of these meetings. The Inter-Allied Committee on Post-War Requirements which had been set up in London two years previously had prepared preliminary estimates of requirements for six months after restoration of the national Governments in eight European countries : its report, which dealt with a wide variety of subjects, was presented to the Council of Unrra at Atlantic City by Sir Frederick Leith-Ross, the Committee's Chairman.

"The estimates of the Inter-Allied Committee for Post-War Requirements provide some indication of the scale of the immense task before U.N.R.R.A. in the European sphere alone. For the first six months after liberation, it is estimated that the eight European Governments represented on the Committee (Belgium-Luxemburg, Czechoslovakia, France, Greece, Netherlands, Norway, Poland and Yugoslavia) will require 45,855,000 metric tons of supplies. Of this total it is estimated that some 23,485,000 tons will require ocean shipping. No estimates were received by the Inter-Allied Committee as to the requirements of the U.S.S.R. which will represent a very important part of the total Allied needs." (B.I.N. vol. xxi, No. 1.)

The committee also dealt with the problem of displaced persons, both

¹ *The Fifteenth Quarter*, Chapter VIII, Section 1.

those who were still in their own countries but had been driven or deported by the enemy from their normal district of residence and those who were taken away by the enemy to work for him. About 16,000,000 persons had been "displaced," of whom probably 6,500,000 of many nationalities were in Germany. The largest single group apart from the Russians, for whom no statistics were available, was probably the Polish, 2,000,000 strong. There were over 1,000,000 French prisoners of war, and over 500,000 French civilian workers were in Germany.

A summary of the results of the first session of Unrra was contributed to *The Times* by its Washington Correspondent (*loc. cit.* December 15 and 16, 1943). Only the main points in his articles on "The Shaping of Relief" can be outlined here. Unrra's activities are to fall under four main heads, viz. :

(A) Relief supplies to war victims immediately on their liberation. (B) The maintenance of relief services, e.g., for the multitude of persons displaced, imprisoned or exiled and eager to return to their homes. (C) The supply of seed, fertilizers and equipment to restart agriculture, and of raw materials for essential industries. (D) The restoration of essential services, lighting, water, electric power, etc., without which the relief services could not function.

Having considered the scope of the vast task of putting "the tortured and chaotic world on its feet" the committee had to devise machinery for obtaining supplies, and assuring their equitable apportionment and distribution. The central authority of Unrra resides in its council on which every member state is represented and has one vote. It is proposed that the council should meet only twice a year "and when it is in recess its powers are to be exercised by a central committee, consisting of the representatives of the United States, Russia, and China, other countries being represented when their needs are under discussion. Detailed work will be handled by four committees, two regional and two functional, the regional committees dealing with Europe and the Far East respectively and the functional committees with supplies and finance. The European committee, to which it is to be presumed that the heaviest immediate tasks will fall, will have its headquarters in London; and Colonel Llewellyn, chief British delegate to Atlantic City and now Minister of Food, is its chairman. This committee will take over the estimates framed by the Inter-Allied Post-War Requirements Bureau . . . set up by the British Government in the autumn of 1941 and including representatives of all the Allied Governments then established in London."

The resolutions passed at Atlantic City laid down broad policies for the Director-General to follow. In their light he determines the areas wherein Unrra will operate, after consultation with the military or civil authority in those areas. "In cases where no recognized national authority exists in a liberated area Unrra will operate for a period and to an extent to be agreed upon between the military command and itself." Where such a national authority exists Unrra will only operate with its consent. If it prove necessary to operate in enemy or ex-enemy territory Unrra will do so only with the agreement of the military command and for the purposes agreed upon between itself and the military command in local control.

"When it came to devising a system of procurement the principle

always in mind was that the war effort must not be impeded. The prosecution of the war naturally demands that scarce supplies and shipping tonnage be carefully controlled and allocated. . . . Thus Unrra demands had to be co-ordinated with other demands by using the existing combined boards for securing supplies and shipping space. The desire in some quarters to create a mammoth procurement agency was defeated and the combined boards . . . are to be used to secure relief and rehabilitation. Unrra . . . will be another claimant upon these very effective organizations. The resolution embodying this principle and policy is rightly regarded as one of the greatest of the conference's achievements."

The fact that some of the nations represented had resources in cash or shipping which they would naturally wish to spend for their own suffering peoples caused misgivings at first but the problem was solved in a statesmanlike manner. The resolutions adopted provided that a nation with no resources available to pay for relief will submit its requirements to the Director-General, who in turn will recommend the combined boards what quantities to provide. Nations able to pay for relief will submit their requirements direct to the combined boards but will also give a copy of their application to the Director-General. He will then exercise his powers to approve or object to such requests. He is thus able "to secure a fair distribution of the goods available as between the 'have' and the 'have-not' nations."

It was realized that the activities of Unrra must be co-ordinated as closely as possible with the war effort. Its task is to follow the liberating armies as closely as possible and to facilitate this task the conference passed resolutions providing for complete co-operation between Unrra and the military authorities before areas are liberated and during the period in which they are under military control. The conference also recommended to member Governments that the transition in each area from military to civil relief operations should be consummated as quickly as military considerations permit.

"The happy solution of securing something like equality of contribution was decided upon in the resolution recommending member Governments whose home territory has not yet been occupied by the enemy to contribute approximately one per cent of the national income of the country for the year ended June 30, 1943." Other resolutions provided that 10 per cent of such contributions should be in a currency which could be expended outside the area of the contributing country, that local currency should be used to purchase supplies and services in the contributing country, and that the consent of a member Government should be obtained before its local currency be used to finance expenditure in other areas.

In his account of the proceedings the Washington Correspondent of *The Times* concluded by mentioning two personal successes at the conference. The first was that of Mr. Dean Acheson, Assistant Secretary of State and chairman of the conference, which he managed with remarkable urbanity, intelligence and skill. Mr. Herbert Lehman "was an inevitable choice for the arduous post of Director-General."

2 : A. THE VICTIMS

German pressure on the Czech people was, if anything, ^{Bohem} intensified as the military situation in Russia grew worse for the Reich. An announcement made in October by Dr. Ripka, Minister of State, gave facts and figures which had reached the exiled Government in London and, if not up-to-date, gave a reliable enough picture of the miseries of the "Protectorate" at the end of the preceding quarter. He said that since the German occupation of Prague in March, 1939, about 750,000 Czechs had been killed, imprisoned or enslaved. Of these

about 200,000 had been sent to concentration camps, some in the "Protectorate," others elsewhere. The number of Czechs deported for forced labour in German factories or for public works, agriculture, etc., was estimated at half a million. From first to last about 50,000 Czechs had been killed, the majority executed by sentences of special courts. Some 10,000 Czechs had been living in Vichy France at the time of its occupation by the Germans and few had escaped. The Jewish population in Czechoslovakia had numbered between 180,000 and 190,000. Most of them had been deported during 1942 when the anti-Jewish measures on which Hitler and Himmler had insisted had been applied with the utmost severity. During 1942, the Minister added, the German Storm Troop units in Prague and Brno (Brunn) had been strengthened. A further drain on Czech man-power had been caused by the calling up of all physically fit Czechs of military age with one German parent for service on the Russian front.¹ At the end of October news reached London that a court martial at Olmütz, in Northern Moravia, had sentenced over 500 Czechs to death on charges of "terrorism and sabotage."

German fury at the refusal of the Poles to listen to ^{Poland} cajoleries or to yield to oppression found vent in further massacres of hostages and in savage mass murders in the Lublin "defence zone." The Poles retaliated by derailing trains and killing such of their tormentors as they could reach. Bürckel, the Governor of the notorious Pawiak prison at Warsaw, was shot in that city with six armed Germans who came to his rescue. German policy continued to be based upon the doctrine of racial superiority. Addressing local Nazi leaders in the Warthegau, a Polish region annexed to Germany, Himmler gave his "unreserved approval" to this policy.

¹ It was not clear whether these "half-Czechs" were actually put into the line to any considerable extent. Some and some Slovaks were found among German prisoners of war captured in Italy.

After saying that anyone with alien blood must be excluded from the privileges of the Reich, he added that some with mixed blood were given the opportunity to join the German race if they wished. "Where conversion was obstinately refused we had to let all the consequences follow as required by the German right to live." In other words the Poles must be killed or driven out. He drew an agreeable picture of the eastern regions becoming "the nursery-garden of purest German blood."

The Polish Government in London received from Poland in October an agreement signed at a secret meeting of representatives of the four chief Polish political parties, viz. : the Peasants, the Socialists, the Nationalists and the Christian Democrats. These parties had agreed to support the Polish underground movement with all their resources. For the present period, the period of peace negotiations and the period immediately following the end of hostilities, they adopted the following programme :

War Aims.—"The basic principle of foreign policy should be co-operation on an equal basis with the Allies, with a distinct emphasis on independence in matters concerning Poland, her sovereign rights and the integrity of her territory."

Peace Aims.—"To obtain western and northern frontiers which would guarantee Poland a wide access to the sea and absolute security and to keep the eastern frontier inviolate. To form a federation of States, the nucleus of which would be a Polish-Czech union. To regulate the matter of national minorities on the basis of traditional freedom and equality of rights and obligations."

This agreement ran counter to the Russian view that the territories east of the Curzon line—at least—should revert to Russia, and to the ominous Russian objection, voiced repeatedly in the Russian Press, and obviously part of Russian policy, to the formation of any federal group among the states bordering on Russia. This applied equally to the view expressed by the Polish Prime Minister in a speech delivered on Armistice Day, viz., that a federation of European states forming groups might be better able to defend themselves against German expansion and domination.¹ He urged that this course would be necessary since international co-operation would be the easier if the smaller nations federated and thus filled the gap which was otherwise certain to occur between Great Powers and small nations. The attitude of the Russian Press remained hostile to the Polish

¹ At a luncheon given by the National Defence Public Interest Committee.

Government in London, and there was no evidence that the conversations at Teheran and Moscow between the representatives of the English-speaking Powers and the U.S.S.R. had improved the situation which had followed the Russian breach of diplomatic relations with Poland.

The protest of Professors and students of Oslo University ^{Norway} against a regulation issued by the Minister of Education that all decisions regarding the admission of students were to be left to the Nazi-appointed rector was followed by several arrests. When these failed to silence protests German soldiers and police, aided by Quisling's police, rounded up all students who did not belong to the Quisling Party on November 30, and took them off for deportation to Germany. The number arrested exceeded 1,200. Oslo University was closed and all women students were placed under house arrest. The first party of deportees sailed for Germany on December 8. They numbered 296. Unwillingly impressed by the bad effect of this suppression of free thought on Swiss and Swedish opinion, the Germans eventually announced (December 15) that 250 of the 1,000 not yet sent to the Reich would be released from Stavern internment camp at once and that the rest would soon follow. But performance of this apparent promise tarried.

Executions of hostages were reported on several occasions. Five were killed for sabotage on October 7 on the Oslo-Kristiansand railway. Terboven described them as belonging to circles "morally and politically responsible for a cowardly and abhorrent crime." Ten more accused of sabotage, membership of an illegal organization or of having been dropped by parachute in Norway to commit anti-German acts were reported executed on October 20. Eight, mostly fishermen, were executed for espionage on October 23 and on November 19 eight more were shot on the charge of trying to form a Communist party. Three more executions were reported from Northern Norway in early December.

The explosion of a German munition ship while unloading in Oslo harbour on December 20 did great damage to buildings in the city. It was not ascribed to sabotage at the time.

On October 1 Gestapo and "Free Corps," *i.e.* Danish ^{Denmark} Nazis, began to round up Jews in Copenhagen, and to

put them on board ships for deportation. Although pastoral letters from the Bishops condemning these persecutions were read in the churches and Swedish public opinion was most disagreeably impressed, the Germans persisted in their policy, which they defended on the ground that the Jews were responsible for the "acts of terror and sabotage" which had aggravated the Danish situation. After most of the small Jewish community in Denmark had been placed under arrest or deported, the Germans discovered that sabotage was as dangerous as ever. Here is a summary of the more serious acts of sabotage and of German reprisals during the period under review.

On October 4 reports of the destruction of two power stations and two war material factories reached Sweden. This led to the disbandment of part of the Danish police force and the introduction of more Gestapo men. The German Minister, Dr. Best, announced that the state of emergency would be lifted at midnight on October 5 but at the same time issued a proclamation maintaining the trial of strikers by court-martial. The destruction of transformer stations in South Jutland caused the reimposition of the curfew on October 17. This was promptly followed by attacks on factories and the offices of the Danish Nazi Party. Over 140 Danish Communists were deported but this had no effect, and on October 28 the German News Agency admitted that a state of emergency had been declared at Copenhagen after a bomb explosion which killed three Germans. The city was heavily fined.

In November acts of sabotage continued. Thefts of arms, the placing of time-bombs in steamers used by the Germans were reported. The "highest state of emergency" was proclaimed in Jutland on November 13 but in the course of the next week railway bridges, transformers and factories were damaged. On November 21 the Germans imposed a curfew on suburbs of Aarhus and the whole of Odense, suspected centres of sabotage, and they ordered the Government to supply 10,000 labourers for work on coastal fortifications. Next day the first executions of Danes were announced. The victims were labourers accused of sabotage and of attacking a German soldier during the black-out. There were many arrests and the Germans appear to have strengthened their garrison in Jutland materially. On November 25 seven Danes were sentenced to death at Aarhus for sabotage and five were executed. Sabotage nevertheless continued and the railways linking Jutland with Germany were extensively damaged.

On December 4 Dr. Best warned the Danes that he would adopt a policy of "pitiless severity" until order was restored and the death penalty would be freely inflicted. The threat did not prevent further sabotage. On December 20 a fire did much damage in the main building of the Rifle Syndicate Works, the only modern arms factory in Denmark, and next day six men entered the shipyard, also at Copenhagen, of Messrs. Burmeister and Wain and blew up the power-house.

It was learnt on December 9 that an underground Council of Freedom had been set up in Denmark. It

represented all active elements in the country from Conservatives to Communists, and had links with the Free Danish movement in Britain. It had prepared a comprehensive plan for reconstruction immediately after the liberation of the country, which outlined the treatment to be meted out to Danes who had joined or assisted the invaders, and a scheme for an immediate return to democracy.

Trials, executions and deportations of Dutch patriots continued. Even darker crimes were known to have been committed, e.g. the sometimes fatal use of prisoners in gas tests at the Mauthausen camp, information of which was given by one who had escaped to a neutral country to a representative of the Dutch Government.¹ Seyss-Inquart's threats that supplies would be cut off by the exportation of all food should attacks on distribution centres and murders of Dutch Nazis continue had no effect.

The Netherlands

On October 21 an important agreement was signed by the exiled Governments of Holland and Belgium on the subject of the respective currencies of the two countries.

The agreement provided for a fixed rate of exchange between the belga and the florin and for making available the currency necessary for their mutual trade. Luxemburg, which was bound to Belgium by the customs union of 1921, was associated with this agreement. The agreement provided for periodic mutual consultation by the Governments and the monetary authorities of the two countries, "with the object of taking by common agreement the measures necessary to maintain the flexibility of the mechanism of payments and to prevent any operations incompatible with the monetary and economic policy of Belgium and the Netherlands."

The agreement also covered the important overseas possessions or mandated territories of the two countries. It was intended as a first step towards the closest economic relations, including the removal of tariff barriers. The fixed rate of exchange agreed on (16.52 Belgian francs or 3.304 belgas to one Netherlands florin, i.e., 6.053 Netherlands florins to 20 belgas or 100 Belgian francs) was that which prevailed before the war.

On December 28 M. E. N. van Kleffens, the Dutch Foreign Minister, broadcast a reply to General Smuts's speech on post-war Europe.

Commenting on the General's advice to the democracies of western Europe to collaborate with Britain after the war he said that the Netherlands

¹ Published in *The Times*, December 15.

could only think of this provided the British Empire and Great Britain in particular "shows, like ourselves, that it has no intention of going once more on the way towards large-scale disarmament." Germany was going to lose the war and that would breed a spirit of revenge. "The future masters of Germany may, perhaps, present themselves as if they were gentle lambs, for the German people have reached great heights of chicanery and hypocrisy when this suited their book. Do not let us be taken in. . . . The morality of a large proportion of the German people has been thoroughly vitiated by . . . Nazi doctrines which have been drummed into the present younger generation and have turned them into a nation of savages." He hoped that the United States after a bitter experience would become conscious of the vital interest of America in the effective preservation of European peace. In that case one might hope to see a strong formation in the west, with America, Canada and other British dominions as the arsenal and vast reservoir of power, with Britain as the base, especially for air-power, and with the Netherlands, Belgium and France forming the bridge-head. "It is difficult to imagine a stronger position for my country." With Russia forming a parallel block in the east a long peace might be achieved for mankind.

Belgium Many Belgians were shot by the Germans during the quarter on a variety of charges, but sabotage continued. A horrible account of the tortures inflicted on persons confined in the Broendonck concentration camp near Antwerp reached London in December. It was brought by Professor Paul Levy, former head of the Belgian Radio News Service, who escaped from the Gestapo to London in December.

On October 5 the Belgian Government in Britain issued a decree-law extending the competence of Belgian courts to cover the institution of proceedings against Belgians who had committed serious crimes outside the national territory against their compatriots or allied nationals, and also against foreigners who had committed serious offences against Belgians abroad. The latter provision would apply to Germans guilty of offences against German deportees.

Italy Italy, whether under Allied or German occupation, paid dearly for her acquiescence in Mussolini's supreme error. The German-held two-thirds suffered most from Allied air-raids, German brutalities and requisitions, and the spiteful and often sanguinary reprisals of the "Fascist-Republicans." In Southern Italy, which was in the hands of the Allies, there was a marked shortage of food. The growers, mostly small farmers, followed the instinct of the peasant, acquisitive yet cautious, and held up their stocks, partly to get better prices, but still more because the harvest had been indifferent, the future

was uncertain, and the general disorder caused by the war was unfavourable to agricultural work. In the villages near the front many of the small farmers were simply bombed or shelled out of their homes and holdings. Losses of live-stock, killed or requisitioned by the authorities in the course of the war and not given back, were a further handicap. Typhus assumed an epidemic form in Naples, and in other cities malnutrition, lack of fuel and the breakdown of the water supply in consequence of the air-raids caused a high incidence of sickness. The officials whom Fascism had schooled in subservience—or intrigue—for many years lacked the initiative to cope with the difficulties, economic, administrative and, not least, psychological of the situation which confronted them.

In German-occupied Italy there were many arrests of politicians, journalists and military officers accused or suspected of hostility to the Germans and to Mussolini. Among the officers arrested was General Guizzoni, Commander-in-Chief of the Italian forces in Sicily during the Allied campaign. Mussolini appointed General Gambara, the commander of the Italian legionaries in Spain, to be C.G.S. of the new Fascist Army which he and Marshal Graziani were trying to raise. On October 27 the Dictator delivered a speech at the second meeting of his "Fascist Republican" Government, outlining the principles on which the new armed forces were to be formed. It was a proclamation, of a sort.

"The Italian nation," he said, "is about to rise slowly from the deep gulf of humiliation and of moral and material collapse into which it was thrown by the traitors of July and September," a phrase which described the Fascists who had turned against him in July, and the King, Marshal Badoglio and the military chiefs responsible for the surrender of September 8. He said that new armed formations would be raised, new chiefs appointed to the provincial administrations and to the police, Republican Fasci were to be formed with special courts (modelled doubtless on the lines of the Nazi "People's Courts") and a constituent assembly was to be summoned to lay the "firm foundations of the Socialist Italian Republic." His Cabinet passed a law instituting the death penalty for "breach of the Fascist oath of loyalty" and a special court was to be formed to deal with those Fascists who had betrayed Fascism at the meeting of the Grand Council on July 24 and by their adverse vote had provided King Victor with a pretext for a *coup d'état*. This said and done the ex-Duce ordered the Ministry of Interior to carry out a purge of the administration. The announcement of the

formation of the special court for the trial of unworthy Fascists strengthened the belief that several of the Fascist chiefs who had voted against Mussolini on July 24 had fallen into his or German hands.

Neither his speech nor the threats and severities of the Germans improved the situation of the Fascist-Republican or Fascist-Socialist Party. There were riots, acts of sabotage and, more rarely, attacks on Germans and Fascists. Fascists and Germans alike visited the cities where these had occurred with severe collective punishments, e.g. Ferrara, where 12 leading citizens were shot by order of Pavolini, the Secretary of the Fascist Party. Riots at Milan and other cities were quelled with a heavy hand, and the Germans announced that persons instigating disturbances directly or indirectly would be punished with death or penal servitude and threatening their families and friends with the same fate. Nevertheless many cases of sabotage continued to be reported, and small parties of officers and soldiers with some working-men formed bands in the Alps. They were joined by a few British soldiers who were still at large, and they sometimes engaged German and Fascist police detachments. In general, however, the attitude of the Italian population towards these bands was sympathetic but prudent. The masses heartily detested Fascism, but few were eager to risk their lives fighting it. Meanwhile the "Fascist Socialist" Party made a great number of new administrative appointments, threw many priests and aristocrats into prison,¹ and on December 23 issued a decree instituting compulsory labour for all male Italians of from 15 to 60 and threatening the disobedient with the loss of their ration cards. Conditions were slightly better in Rome, and the Germans were, perhaps, prevented from laying about them as they would have wished by the watchful presence of the Vatican, but the people suffered great privations and exactions.

In southern Italy, so far as it was in Allied hands, there was much gesticulatory political activity. Count Sforza, a former Foreign Minister, who was regarded with distrust

¹ Speaking generally, the old families in Italy were anti-Fascist as the French aristocracy had been anti-Nazi. "Big business" there, as in France, had a more chequered record.

by many Britons and aversion by Greeks and Yugoslavs, returned from the United States on October 19 after more than 20 years' absence, and with the venerable Professor Croce soon took the lead in a movement for the formation of a "political Government" in place of Marshal Badoglio's service Ministry. At first, indeed, both were disposed to support the Marshal's Government but would not enter it unless King Victor abdicated. The Marshal, however, urged that the Germans must first be expelled and that such radical measures as the forced abdication of the King should await the liberation of Italy when the whole people and not merely a fraction could decide on the form of Government. It was certainly something of a pretension for the characterless Neapolitans and the backward population of southern Italy, for long the chief supporters of Fascism, to claim to impose their own solutions on Romans and Tuscans, Lombards and Piedmontese. However, neither Count Sforza nor his allies saw it in that light, and the rift between them and the Marshal widened.

Five parties emerged from the Fascist collapse in southern Italy. These were the Communists, led by Signor Ercoli, the Liberals, whose principal leader was Professor Croce, the Socialists, the *Partito d'Azione*, a new formation which was understood to have played the chief part in fomenting anti-German strikes in northern Italy, and the Catholic Democrats, formerly known as the *Popolare*, who chiefly represented the millions of small owners who held perhaps a third of the land. In spite of his advanced age the Rey, Don Sturzo was still the chief of this party which had once disputed the "peasant front" with the Fascisti. These parties soon formed a "Democratic Front" and a Committee of National Liberation. Whether their agreement on social and economic issues went very far or had any common platform beyond a general advocacy of the breaking up of the large estates was by no means clear, but all agreed that the King, whom Democrats and Communists alike blamed for his surrender to Fascism in 1922, must abdicate. Those who preferred a constitutional monarch to a republic—and Signor Croce was among these—would not hear of the Prince of Piedmont succeeding his father on the throne. Though not a Fascist, he had, they claimed, shown weakness and subservience to the Fascist regime. They hoped to save the monarchy by making the King's grandson, a child of six, King of Italy under a Council of Regency which would train him in constitutional ways. Whether this proposal would benefit either Italy or the cause of constitutional monarchy was for Italians to decide. Foreign observers were sceptical.

Marshal Badoglio's refusal to insist on the King's abdication exposed him to the criticism of the Democratic

Front, whose spokesmen charged his administration with being "managed" from behind the scenes by pro-Fascist admirals and generals, and sharply attacked his choice of Dr. Filippo Naldi as head of the Press Bureau. In fact, the Marshal's Government made a good beginning of their promised purge of the administration, although they took no steps against the small bureaucratic fry, who, in Marshal Badoglio's words, "had to join the Party in order to make a living," or those high officials who "had been forced to become members on pain of dismissal from their posts." On December 12 the Government issued a decree for the elimination of Fascists from public employment, governmental or municipal.

Its principal clauses provided for the removal from such posts of all men who had held high rank in the party hierarchy, of Fascists who had held such municipal offices as mayor in a large town, and of all those party veterans who had taken part in the march on Rome, provided that they were over 18 years of age and therefore presumably responsible adults when they did so.

Having decided to hold a "congress of democratic parties" at Naples on December 20, the Neapolitan Committee of National Liberation were much disappointed when the Allied military authorities prohibited the meeting there. They telegraphed protests to President Roosevelt, Marshal Stalin and Mr. Churchill.

In these they pointed out that the congress presented no danger to military security, and that the prohibition seemed inconsistent with the resolutions of the Moscow Conference (q.v.) and appeared to be service to King Victor's Government to which all political parties had declined to give their confidence. The military authorities on December 21 withdrew their ban on the congress provided that it met further from the front than Naples and that no more than 50 persons attended it.

By this time a new party had joined the Democratic Front. This was the party of Justice and Liberty (*Giustizia e Libertà*) which had been formed by Signor Lussu and the patriotic Roselli brothers, who fell victims while in exile in France to Fascist assassins. One of its rules was that no adherent of the party might accept office, pay or employment from a foreign government.

B. The RESURGENCE OF FRANCE

When the future historian comes to survey and classify the stages of the resurgence of France he may well decide that the three months from the October to the December of 1943 marked one of its most formative periods. It was then that not merely the disintegration but the actual decomposition of Vichy France became nakedly apparent, that the resistance movement inside metropolitan territory took on new forms, and the administration of what in effect if not in fact was the Fourth Republic took shape. It was a period of growth, achievement, and assertion. Any chronicle of the three months must start with the development of resistance inside France; for unless the bitterness as well as the breadth of the struggle there and the desires and demands of the patriots are understood much of what was said and done in Algiers is meaningless. Indeed, it is not too much to say that the word of metropolitan France became articulate in Africa.

Throughout 1943 the conscription of French manpower for German war factories proceeded remorselessly. Laval sought to cloak the crime as an act of "fraternity." For themselves French men and women reacted both violently and positively. Labour conscription added new sorrow to the separation of families, and rather than cross the Rhine the young men of France took to the *maquis*. Thus began a heroic and remarkable development of the national resistance movement. That movement was already well organized and closely co-ordinated, and was almost daily engaged in wrecking roads and railways, power stations and industrial plants. The men of the *maquis* brought to the resistance a reinforcement of immense virtue and value. They were mostly young, and in the hills and forests they organized sorties and ambushes, harried the forces sent against them, and fired the youth of France by their example. The *maquisards* were concentrated mainly in Haute-Savoie, but they were active in other departments. Soon they totalled many tens of thousands of young men who would otherwise have been deported to work in German factories.

At the same time, resistance spread and strengthened far beyond the *maquis*.

The situation, in fact, became thoroughly alarming to the Germans and their servants at Vichy. The Paris wireless, which spoke for Field-Marshal Rundstedt, characterized the patriots either as "terrorists" or as "Communists." In view of the deteriorating authority of Vichy, the Germans demanded the sternest measures against the resistance movement. In Joseph Darnand they found the appropriate agent of their will. He was appointed Secretary-General for the Maintenance of Order, and Laval's militiamen, modelled on the S.S., were put at his disposal. Later, his powers were widely extended. Darnand was cast in the Himmler and Heydrich mould—heartless and without conscience, devoid of patriotism, but in the front rank of Europe's technicians of terror. Before the year was out he had, in German and Vichy eyes, justified his appointment by the number of French citizens put to death. Furthermore, he took in hand the organization of a full-scale campaign against the *maquis*, to be launched early in 1944.

In Algiers, political developments matched the growth of the resistance movement in France. The Committee of National Liberation was drastically reconstructed—transformed is perhaps the more accurate word. Five members resigned; among them General Giraud, General Georges, and General Legentilhomme. Four of the seven new Commissioners were delegates to the Consultative Assembly, which held its inaugural session on November 3. The Assembly, described as "a voice for France," had direct representation from the resistance movement, the fierce passions and resentments of which it reflected more and more. It is no secret that the changes in the Committee of Liberation were due in large part to suspicion of the aims and ambitions of the generals. Not even General Giraud himself was immune. He was everywhere acknowledged to be an outstanding soldier, although it was said that he belonged to the older school. Doubtless he, too, was relieved to be rid of political responsibility, for he had little enough respect for politics

and not much more understanding of them. The stature of the Committee grew with the march of events. General de Gaulle expressed the aspirations of many of his compatriots when he spoke of it as "in fact the Government of the French Republic." Although neither Great Britain nor the United States recognized it as such, its new status was tacitly admitted. When Mr. Duff Cooper, a firm friend of France, was appointed the representative of His Majesty's Government with the Committee he was given the personal rank of Ambassador.

The Committee survived two unhappy episodes. One arose out of the crisis in the Lebanon, an account of which appears in Chapter II of this chronicle.

There was a disposition in certain quarters to saddle General de Gaulle himself with personal responsibility for the gross mishandling of what was, against the background of the war, a minor affair. His intervention, it was said, precipitated the crisis, and those circles which have never ceased to charge General de Gaulle with seeking personal rule were for a while hot on his trail. There is no evidence that the charge had any substance. His juridical position was unassailable: those who urged him to sign away the rights of France in the Lebanon and Syria had already entered a caveat that he and the Committee must not regard themselves as a provisional Government and could not speak and act in the name of France. Mr. Churchill, whose loyal friendship to France has never been in question, described the Committee (November 9) as "not the owners but the trustees of the title deeds of France."

The other episode arose out of the "explosive" speech of General Smuts, in which he said "France has gone, and will be gone in our day and perhaps for many a day." It was an inept, unhappy, and shallow phrase. The General spoke, unfortunately, while serving as a member of the British War Cabinet, and in some quarters it was felt that his words had some official authority, but declarations by Mr. Churchill and Mr. Eden made it abundantly clear that he spoke only for himself.

The public reaction in Great Britain was immediate and emphatic, and the incident was turned to good by the demonstration of British faith in the restoration of the greatness of France. On Frenchmen the effect was painful. The Germans and Vichy seized on the offending phrase to tell France what fate the Allies had prepared for her. How little relation to realities General Smuts's words had was shown both by the spread of

resistance in France and by the steady evolution of the political organizations set up in Algiers. The desire to have done with the humiliating past was seen dramatically in two seemingly divergent but, in fact, closely related matters.

One was the movement known as *l'épuration*—the great purge of all those individuals and influences which were in any way associated with the capitulation of 1940 and the Vichy co-operation with the enemy. Three leading Frenchmen were arrested in response to the demand for the cleansing of the public life and service—Flandin, a former Prime Minister; Peyrouton, a former Minister of the Interior under Vichy and Governor of Algeria; and Boisson, former Governor of French West Africa. A fourth Frenchman, Pucheu, was to be tried for his life. The second was the means of restoring the sovereignty of the people of France after liberation. The original plans underwent much revision in the course of debate in the Assembly and the Press, and had not taken final form at the turn of the year. A summary must await a later issue of this chronicle. It requires to be said, however, that fundamental to all the proposals was the recognition that there must be safeguards against "*Boulangisme*" and that the democracy of all France must be consulted at the earliest possible moment and to the fullest extent.

3 : THE ACCOMPLICES

Finland There was no change in the attitude of the Finnish Government during the quarter, but public opinion was increasingly pacific and increasingly critical of its "waiting" attitude. This tendency was not, however, promoted by the attitude of the Russian Press, although its gibe that Finnish politicians had a habit of protesting their close links with Germany when they visited the Reich and of denying these before their own people was well founded. But when Russians expressed the opinion that "Since Mannerheim's counter-revolution the Finnish people have had no opportunity of working out a national way of life in the freedom which the Russian revolutionary leaders envisaged for them 26 years ago,"

the Finns, and not the Finns only, might have pointed out that the revolution of the Communist minority in Finland which was supported by the Russian garrisons in 1917-18 was scarcely calculated to bring the Finns any sort of freedom—unless a Communist dictatorship could so be described. Nor could many of the British and American observers who regarded the Finns' second war with Russia as an emotional folly take the line followed by

some Russians that Soviet Russia had done nothing to provoke Finnish hostility !

On December 17 the President accepted the resignation of Hr. Fagerholm, Minister of Social Welfare, and appointed Hr. Aleris Aaltonen, Secretary-General of the Social-Democratic Party in his stead. Fagerholm's resignation was believed to have been brought about by German pressure.

Save for announcements of further Slovak desertions Slovakia there was no news of the prowess of the three Slovak divisions on the Russian front.

The Slovak Press continued to inveigh against the "whisperers" and "defeatists" whose numbers were increasing and to attack the "old Czechoslovaks," i.e., those Slovaks who remained loyal to the Czechoslovak Republic.

There was evidence in spite of Hungarian official Hungary denials that three Hungarian divisions were being kept in Russia by the German High Command, perhaps against the wish of the Hungarian Government. Hungarian criticism of the Germans grew more outspoken with each German defeat. Hr. K. Bolander wrote in *Svenska Dagbladet* in early October, after taking part in a trip to Hungary arranged for Swedish journalists, that

his greatest surprise was to see how widespread and marked anti-German feeling was and how openly expressed. The Hungarians were well aware that they were in the wrong box, but they also knew that attempts to get disentangled from Germany might lead to German counter-measures resulting in complete annihilation, and the possibility of the Germans letting loose neighbouring peoples on Hungary. The Slav menace in the case of a German breakdown was considered even greater, and the Hungarians' only hope seemed to be a miraculous intervention by the Allies. At the same time Hungarians claimed that although they could not risk the conversion of their country into a battlefield like Italy, they were refusing German demands on all possible occasions. (*The Times*, Stockholm message, October 11.)

This was only half true. The Hungarian people clearly realized that the war was going ill for the Germans and were trying to show that they had never approved of the alliance. The Government had withdrawn most of the troops from Russia, but they were keeping them embodied in Hungary to defend their ill-gotten gains from Czechoslovakia, Rumania, and Yugoslavia. As the Diplomatic Correspondent of *The Times* observed (*loc. cit.* December 1), "when confederates fall out it does not

mean that one of them has immediately become virtuous."

Hungarian official pronouncements certainly did not show any tendency towards a new, pacific policy. Addressing the opening meeting of Parliament on November 12 the Prime Minister, M. Kallay, said that the struggle was approaching Hungary from all directions. "The military forces of Russia, Germany and the Anglo-Saxon Powers have deployed around us. The internal order of our country must be maintained and secured whatever happens." The Army he said, would fight for the nation's frontiers, but he does not seem to have defined these nor did he once mention the German alliance. He referred, however, to Hungarian territorial claims when he said, "We must not gamble away our chances of voicing our demands with the full weight of our political, military, economic, social and spiritual forces when the complicated problems of Central Europe come to be disentangled."

Rumania The relations between the Rumanians and their Hungarian neighbours did not improve. Demonstrations were held on the 25th anniversary of the Rumanian annexation of Transylvania at which Marshal Antonescu and several Ministers were present, and on December 5 mass demonstrations in the capital and other large cities expressed the national grief for the loss of more than half Transylvania, ceded to Hungary on December 5, 1940, in consequence of the Vienna award (cf. *The Fourth Quarter*, pp. 207-9). On the home front, in spite of arrests by the Rumanian police and a general tightening-up of German military supervision and control, there was increasing unrest. Sabotage grew more frequent and a proclamation issued by the Military Commander of Bucarest on October 25, calling on all persons possessing arms to surrender them to the authorities within a week, suggested that the authorities feared a revival of Iron Guard activities. The arrival of fresh German troops and of German S.S. units in Rumania was reported on several occasions during December. The affairs of Bulgaria have been the subject of references in Chapter II, Section 2 of this volume.

4 : THREE NEUTRALS

Sweden Relations between Sweden and the Reich were strained during the quarter. German violence in Denmark aroused much feeling in Sweden, which was further

embittered by the destruction on October 22 of a Swedish air-liner flying from Scotland to Stockholm by a German aeroplane. Thirteen out of fifteen people on board lost their lives. The Germans admitted a "mistake" by the *Luftwaffe*. On October 28 the Swedish Government, who had just entered a diplomatic protest against the shooting-down of the air-liner, were informed that the German Government could no longer grant Swedish ships a safe conduct on account of military measures in the Skagerrak.

The wholesale arrests of professors and students at Oslo University (q.v. Section 2 of this Chapter) provoked general public indignation, and the rectors of all the Swedish Universities and the united students' organizations communicated a protest from the Swedish academic world to the Government. Flags were flown at half-mast and the *Dagens Nyheter* demanded reprisals.

The Cabinet met on December 1 and sent a note to the Reich Government urging that the arrested students should be released "in the interest of future German-Swedish relations." This action was warmly praised by the Press. On December 4 Ribbentrop told the Swedish Chargé d'Affaires that Germany refused to discuss such questions with Sweden and must ask the Swedish Government to refrain from interfering in German-Norwegian affairs.

After describing the Swedish representations as "incomprehensible to the German people" he went on to reproach Sweden for not reacting "when British aggression forced Scandinavia into the war" and for not fighting beside Finland against Russia. Meanwhile there had been public demonstrations against the German action and Upsala University ceased work to join in a protestatory procession, the first time such a thing had occurred in the University's history of 466 years.

Undeterred by their rebuff from Ribbentrop, the Swedish Government answered him on December 16, and when the German Minister, Hr. Thomsen, declared that he was not authorized to discuss Norwegian affairs, they presented their reply through their Minister in Berlin on December 17.

The reply stated that Sweden could not accept the German standpoint that the Swedish Government had not the right of open discussion of Norwegian affairs with Berlin. It repeated that the German action could not fail to have repercussions on Swedish-German relations and added "if this action is carried through further deterioration is unavoidable." The faculty of Gothenburg University had already published its decision to sever all active scientific relations with Germany (December 16) "so long as present political conditions prevail in Germany."

A long-standing Norwegian wish was fulfilled when Hr. Jens Bull, Norwegian Chargé d'Affaires in Stockholm, was recognized as King Haakon's minister plenipotentiary on December 16. Public interest in post-war international relations was marked, and on December 13 Hr. Unden, formerly Foreign Minister, speaking at Stockholm, said that the country was at least as anxious as any other democracy to join in a fresh attempt to set up a system of security against war.

"Failure last time," he said, "may have damped expectations but experience in this war has shown how brittle is the policy of neutrality when the world is on fire." The basic ideas of the League of Nations were as valid now as they had been 23 years ago. It was highly probable that Norway, Denmark and Finland would take "a positive attitude towards international organization"; and a different attitude on Sweden's part would mean a degree of isolation even in relations with them. Entering an international organization had its risks but "we must be prepared for risks whatever road we choose for our policy."

Broadcasting on Christmas Day the Prime Minister warned the nation against taking peace and neutrality for granted and observed that although Sweden wished to be at peace with other peoples and although the situation was quiet at present, they were not out of the danger-zone yet. On New Year's Eve the Commander-in-Chief warned the armed forces in an Order of the Day against becoming "tired of preparedness," and said, "I must warn you sharply against the notion that the danger of war is disappearing. It may become real sooner than we suspect."

Switzer-
land

Seven clubs and two publishing concerns were dissolved by decree on October 13 for disseminating foreign propaganda. It was made known on October 18 that there were about 61,500 refugees in Switzerland.

These included 34,300 internees, of whom 20,685 were Italian soldiers and 200 escaped British prisoners of war. Of the rest 4,000 were employed in industry and commerce, about 1,200 were on the land and 8,000 were under observation and had a fixed residence. This information was given to the public after the conference of police directors of the various cantons.

The arrests of Norwegian students and professors aroused protests at the Universities of Basle and Zürich. On October 31 Parliamentary elections were held for the Council of States or Upper House, where each Canton is represented by two deputies, and the National Council. There was no important change in the Upper House. In the National Council several members of the Radical (Ministerialist) Party were defeated, and the Socialists, with 49 members, were left with pride of place. On

December 15 the Federal Assembly elected Dr. Stampfli President for 1944. There was one change in the Federal Council, where M. Welter (Minister of Customs and Finance) resigned and M. Nobs (Socialist) took his place.

Events in Spain during the quarter confirmed the ^{Spain} impression that while an important section of official opinion was averse to any action which might involve the country in difficulties with the English-speaking Allies, powerful influences working behind the scenes still favoured the maintenance of close and friendly relations with Germany in spite of the dangers of such a course. Internally, however, the fear of another civil war dominated the minds of all, Royalists, Falangists, and the nominally suppressed parties of the Left. This led to a curious state of affairs in which the pro-German elements showed themselves "willing to wound" if they could do so without being detected, but mortally "afraid to strike." Thus, much was made of Spain's neutrality, and from time to time statements were published announcing the arrival in Spain of contingents of the "Blue Division" of Spanish "volunteers" from the Russian front, where, as Sir Samuel Hoare had told General Franco, its continued presence "was a serious obstacle to the development of cordial relations between Great Britain and Spain." The last contingent was officially stated to have arrived and to have been disbanded at San Sebastian on December 22. Information, nevertheless, was reaching the British Government that some of these troops were remaining in Russia "as volunteers."

The text of the Anglo-Portuguese declaration concerning the Azores was published by the Press Department without comment. The Foreign Minister, General Jordana, stated that when the hour of arms had passed and the hour for peace negotiations had come, "Spain is certain of finding among the nations remaining outside the conflict, and particularly Portugal, and, indeed, among the belligerents themselves, support and collaboration necessary to make fraternal ideas triumphant." On the same day (October 12) he issued a note to the Press pointing out that Spain was maintaining a vigilant neutrality.

Annoyance had been caused in official circles in the United States by the news that General Jordana had sent a congratulatory telegram to "President" Laurel, the Filipino whom the Japanese had appointed President of

the Philippine Republic in place of President Quezon. The Spanish explanation that the telegram was no more than a recognition of the historical, cultural and religious ties between Spain and the Philippines was eventually accepted by the State Department, and it was officially stated in Madrid on November 20 that the incident should be regarded as closed.

The Falangist Party's provincial chiefs met in Madrid to deliberate on party questions in December. At the closing session on December 21 the secretary-general proposed the abolition of the Falangist militia, which he declared to be unnecessary, in view of the solidarity of the Falange with the Army. General Franco, who was present, approved the proposal. The misconduct of undisciplined Falangists who broke into the American Consulate at Valencia on December 18, tore down photographs and harangued visitors on the premises and of a larger number who broke, armed and in uniform, into the British Vice-Consulate at Saragossa on November 19 and 20 and insulted the Vice-Consul and his family, provoked representations from the aggrieved Governments which were met by official apologies and assurances that the culprits would be punished. A new amnesty decree was published on December 23 authorizing the conditional release of civil war prisoners serving sentences of 20 years and a day. German and Fascist Italian broadcasts that Spain had recognized Mussolini's "Fascist Republic" were described to the American Ambassador by a high Foreign Office official as flagrant lies, designed to create difficulties between Spain and the United Nations.

The principal events of the quarter in Portugal and Turkey are chronicled in the First Chapter of this Record. The Afghans lived peaceably and preserved their neutrality as before.

CHAPTER IX

KING, MINISTERS AND PARLIAMENT

I : THE KING AND QUEEN

The activities of the King and Queen were many and varied in the closing months of the year, during which the appointment of the Duke of Gloucester to be Governor-General of Australia was announced. (See Chapter XII.) The King celebrated his 48th birthday on December 10, and was the recipient of telegrams from all parts of the Empire conveying congratulations and good wishes.

Early in December his Majesty had an attack of influenza which confined him to his room for a few days. The attack was not serious and he made a speedy recovery.

The Queen paid a surprise visit to Scotland on October 14, and inspected the Lord Roberts Memorial Workshops at Dundee. When she returned to London the next day she was accompanied by Princess Elizabeth and Princess Margaret, who had been on holiday in the north.

A diamond jubilee parade of the Boys' Brigade was held at Windsor Castle on Saturday, October 16, when the King, accompanied by the Queen and Princess Elizabeth, inspected a representative detachment of 300 members drawn from the London district. On the following day, more than 2,000 women of the A.T.S., drawn from every command in the United Kingdom, marched past the Queen, their Commandant-in-Chief, in front of Buckingham Palace, and afterwards attended a service at Westminster Abbey. The occasion was the fifth birthday of the A.T.S., the largest of the women's uniformed services.

Messages of warm welcome were sent by the King and Queen to meet the repatriated prisoners of war who returned home in October. The Queen subsequently met scores of these men when she visited in December an R.A.M.C. depot in the South-Eastern Command, and

heard from many of them stories of their experiences in German and Italian hands.

The Queen accepted an invitation to become Senior Benchet of Lincoln's Inn, and, it was announced on November 2, was duly called to the Bar *in absentia*. This was the first occasion on which a lady had been made a Benchet of any of the Inns of Court.

The Regent of Iraq, Emir Abdul Illah, who paid a visit lasting some weeks to this country at the invitation of the British Government, was a guest of the King and Queen at Buckingham Palace for two days in November. He accompanied them to the British Legion Festival of Remembrance at the Royal Albert Hall on November 11.

The King sent a message of congratulation to the B.B.C. on its 21st anniversary, on November 14, in which he said—"In peace and war alike it has proved itself a great national institution, rendering high service to the State," and wished it all success in the future. On December 2 he paid his first visit to a pre-O.C.T.U., one of the camps where selected men go through their preliminary training before taking their officer's course. Hundreds of young men gave him a great welcome at a camp in the South-Eastern Command, and he watched them at various exercises.

A number of investitures were held at the Palace. Afternoon parties were given by their Majesties on November 24 for officers of the war services of the United States in this country ; and on December 1 for officers of the Empire Services, when General Smuts, the Dominion High Commissioners, and nearly 500 officers of the Dominion Forces were among the guests. General Smuts was also entertained by the King and Queen in the country on November 21.

His Majesty's broadcast on Christmas Day was a greeting to "all who dwell within the family of the British Commonwealth and Empire," and a message of hope to Allies fighting with us or in the occupied countries looking forward to our coming victory.

Since he last spoke, the King said, many things had changed, but not the spirit of the British people. We knew that much hard work and hard fight-

ing, perhaps harder than ever before, were necessary for victory ; "We shall not rest from our task till it is nobly ended." Then he spoke of the comradeship being forged among the peoples fighting and serving together, proof of which he had seen during his visit to North Africa in the summer. In this spirit of unity men of diverse races had also come together at the council table. "So, as we see the clouds breaking on this Christmas Day, we should take comfort from our faith that out of desolation shall rise a new hope ; and out of strife be born a new brotherhood."

The Regency Act, which became law on November 11, resulted from a message sent by the King to both Houses in September recommending the amendment of the Regency Act, 1937, in two respects.

The message pointed out that the Act excluded "any who were not of full age" from the persons in the line of succession to the Crown who might be nominated Counsellors of State, and went on : "The earnest desire of the Queen and Myself that our beloved daughter, the Princess Elizabeth, should have every opportunity of gaining experience in the duties which would fall upon her in the event of her accession to the Throne leads Me to recommend that you should take into consideration the amendment of the Act mentioned in such manner as to provide for including among the Counsellors of State the person who is heir-apparent or heir-presumptive to the Throne if over the age at which the accession of a Sovereign does not necessitate a Regency—namely, the age of 18."

The Bill introduced as a result of this message permitted Princess Elizabeth, the Heir-Presumptive, to exercise the functions of a Counsellor of State at any time after she attained the age of 18, on April 21, 1944. It also provided for the removal of the anomaly in the previous Act that the Queen must be appointed to the Council of State during the King's absence from the country, even though she, too, might be absent—as had happened when she accompanied the King to Canada. The Bill was accorded both public and Parliamentary commendation, and, in the words of the Home Secretary in the Commons on October 19, formed an agreeable reminder of the assured position the monarchy occupied.

2 : MINISTERS AND PARLIAMENT

The last quarter of 1943 saw the end of one Parliamentary Session, and the beginning of another which was soon called the "reconstruction Session," though perhaps more in hope than expectation. The Commons had two important debates on the war—the first on November 11,

when Mr. Eden gave an account of the successful outcome of the Conference of Foreign Secretaries at Moscow, from which he had just returned (see Chapter I, Section 2) ; and the other just before the Christmas adjournment, in which he described the achievements of the series of conferences at Cairo and Teheran where he had accompanied the Prime Minister.

But Parliament during these three months also showed its anxiety to get to grips with a number of matters fundamental to post-war policy at home—the acquisition of land for public purposes, location of industry, a major scheme of social security—about which the continued inability of the Government to announce basic decisions had aroused persistent criticism. The Prime Minister recognized this concern in a speech at the Mansion House on November 9, in which he spoke of the simple duty of the Government to plan beforehand so that after the war there should be food, work and homes for all ; and great hopes were centred on the appointment three days later of Lord Woolton to be Minister of Reconstruction.

Recurrent topics of debate in both Houses were coal production and man-power in the mines (see Chapter X), the future of civil aviation, inter-Imperial collaboration, the famine in Bengal (see Chapter XIII), and various aspects of international co-operation during and after the war. The first of the major reconstruction measures, the Education Bill, was produced on December 15. It followed broadly the bold scheme for complete reform of the education system outlined in the White Paper of the previous July.

A notable event was the address which General Smuts delivered to a big gathering of members of both Houses at a private meeting of the Empire Parliamentary Association on "Thoughts on the new world." When the speech was published a fortnight later the ripples of comment and controversy spread widely. Parliament adjourned for the Christmas recess under the shadow of the Prime Minister's illness.

Reconstruction at home received additional impetus in the address which Mr. Churchill delivered at the Lord

Mayor's luncheon at the Mansion House on November 9, the fourth since he became Prime Minister. While recording with satisfaction that the Allies had had a year of almost unbroken victory, he refused to share the complacency of those who prophesied an early end to the war in Europe.

"I am myself proceeding on the assumption that the campaign of 1944 will be the most severe and, to the Western Allies, the most costly in life of any we have yet fought. . . . This is no time for relaxation or soft thoughts on the joys of peace and victory." And later, "It is a reasonable assumption that unless we make some grave mistakes in strategy, the year 1944 will see the climax of the European War."

We could not exclude the possibility of new forms of attack upon this island, Mr. Churchill said. Should they come, they would certainly call for the utmost efficiency and devotion by fire-watchers and Home Guards, and also for a further display of the firmness and fortitude for which the British nation had won renown. This was no time to divide the unity of the nation by raising fierce party political issues, or to dream easy dreams of brave new worlds. Calling for unrelenting and unwearying efforts "through every living minute," he said that there was no need to exclude from the mind the conviction that victory would certainly be won, and went on—

But that does not mean that our war task is done. Another tremendous and practical duty is involved in what is called winning the war. . . . We must make sure that confusion and chaos do not follow the victories of the armies or stultify the surrender unexpectedly early by the enemy. I regard it as a definite part of the duty and responsibility of this National Government to have its plans perfected in a vast and practical scheme to make sure that in the years immediately following the war, food, work, and homes are found for all. No airy visions, no party doctrines, no party prejudices, no political appetites, no vested interests, must stand in the way of the simple duty of providing beforehand for food, work, and homes. They must be prepared now during the war. They must come into action as soon as the victory is won. On this far-reaching work his Majesty's Government are now concentrating all the energies that can be spared from the actual struggle with the enemy.

Outstanding in the Cabinet changes announced on November 12 was the selection of Lord Woolton, hitherto Minister of Food, to be Minister of Reconstruction, for this was the first time a Minister had been given full authority to deal with all aspects of post-war reconstruction policy, and the fact that the new Minister was also given a seat in the War Cabinet added significance to the appointment. Lord Woolton before the war had been widely known as a prominent figure in business, but he had also taken a life-long interest in social problems; and the principles on which he had conducted the Ministry of Food since had won public confidence and

approval. Sir William Jowitt, who as Minister without Portfolio had been in charge of preparatory work on reconstruction plans, became Lord Woolton's assistant and spokesman in the House of Commons. The new Minister of Food was Colonel J. J. Llewellyn, then serving in Washington as Minister Resident for Supply. At the same time Mr. H. U. Willink was appointed Minister of Health, in place of Mr. Ernest Brown.

Until October 1, when he resigned, Mr. Willink had been since September, 1940, Special Commissioner for the care and rehousing of the homeless in the London Defence Region. Mr. Brown went to the office of Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, relinquished by Mr. Duff Cooper, who shortly afterwards was appointed the United Kingdom representative with the French Committee of National Liberation, with the personal rank of Ambassador. Mr. Ben Smith, one of the junior Labour Ministers, was sent to fill the vacancy at Washington; and Mr. A. T. Lennox-Boyd was given Mr. Smith's former post as Parliamentary Secretary to the Ministry of Aircraft Production. In December, the appointment of Mr. R. G. Casey, since March, 1942, Minister of State Resident in the Middle East, to be Governor of Bengal, entailed his resignation from the War Cabinet.

The House reassembled on October 12 after a short recess since September 25, to be informed by the Prime Minister, in an unexpected and happy preliminary to the business that had been arranged, of the agreement of the Portuguese Government to accord Britain facilities in the Azores. (See Chapter I, Section 1.) In characteristic fashion he excited the attention of the House by introducing the announcement as "arising out of the treaty signed between this country and Portugal in the year 1373." His account of the latest application of that engagement concluded with an expression of the Government's appreciation of an ally whose loyalty to Britain never wavered in the darkest hours of the war—sentiments which members loudly cheered.

From this peak the House plunged into the anxieties relating to coal production and the unrest in the coal-fields. (q.v., Chapter X.)

On the question whether the present system of Government control of the mines was adequate—one of the main points disputed by the mine-workers—Major Lloyd George, Minister for Fuel and Power, said the Government would not hesitate to make such changes as might be necessary in war-time control, but insisted that the immediate job was to get better production and that attention must not be diverted from that by the political aspects. The deterioration in the coal situation was deplored in all

parts of the House, although there was sharp disagreement about the cause of it. Considerable dissatisfaction had been felt among the miners' M.P.s by the Minister's speech, and Mr. Churchill himself intervened when the debate was resumed on the second day. He rejected explicitly the claim for nationalization of the mines during the war. Unless it could be proved that that was the only way the war could be won they would not be justified in embarking on such a tremendous business without a General Election, which would be harmful to the war effort. He regarded the talk about unrest in the industry as a little unjust to the miners, and putting strikes and voluntary absenteeism in a sympathetic perspective, asked that allowance should be made for "fifth year of war" circumstances. He gave the Government's assurance that the present system of control, with any improvements made to it, would be continued after the war until Parliament should decide on the future structure of the industry. Not all M.P.s felt able to share the Prime Minister's optimism about the situation in the industry, but later Mr. Greenwood stated that the Labour Party would not divide the House.

Nearly two months after this debate, on December 2, the Minister of Labour announced to the House that some of the young men between 18 and 25, when called up for national service, were to be directed to the mines, and his decision to select them by a ballot system.

Sir John Anderson made his first speech as Chancellor of the Exchequer, in succession to the late Sir Kingsley Wood, on October 14, in presenting for second reading the Wage-Earners' Income Tax Bill embodying the "pay-as-you-earn" plan for collecting income tax from wage-earners. The House welcomed the Bill with a gratitude in which there was a more or less lively sense of favours still to come, and this turned out—by stages—to be justified. Sir John Anderson first expressed his readiness to include salary-earners whose incomes were below £600 a year. He was pressed from all sides to extend the plan to all salary earners and on November 3, when the Bill came up for third reading, he accepted the logic of the sustained arguments and promised by subsequent legislation to extend the pay-as-you-earn principle over the whole range of Schedule E taxpayers. The Bill, amended to include salaries up to £600 a year, was passed.

On November 4 the House of Commons agreed, within a period of five or six minutes, to a Vote of Credit of £1,125,000,000, which increased to £4,250,000,000, the sums voted for this purpose since the beginning of the financial year. Sir John Anderson estimated that it would meet expenditure till about the middle of February, 1944. During the past six months the daily expenditure on the fighting and supply services had been about £11,000,000 out of a total expenditure of some £13,250,000. The figure would have been higher, he explained, but for the assistance being given by Canada on lend-lease terms.

Parliament had also begun the task of setting its own house in order. It authorized the extension of its own life for a ninth year by passing the Prolongation of Parliament Act ; and sought through the Parliament (Elections and Meetings) Act to provide a more efficient and effective register of Parliamentary voters in war-time conditions. This measure embodied proposals for a register based on the national registration system, to be used not only at by-elections but at a general election should one occur during the war. The register was to be in three parts—one for civilians, for whom there would be a two-months residential qualification, one for business premises, and a Service register. There was also to be proxy voting for voters oversea, including civilians engaged on war work abroad ; and for the services at home an option to vote by post or in person.

The Prime Minister on October 14 made the initial proposal for a Speaker's Conference to examine matters relating to electoral reform. In the first instance, however, the Government desired that there should be a wide debate on the subject to give the House full opportunity of expressing its opinion, and intended to set apart two days for this.

A more domestic topic, the rebuilding of the House of Commons, destroyed by enemy action on May 10, 1941, evoked from Mr. Churchill one of his happiest oratorical efforts. On October 28 he moved for the appointment of a Select Committee to consider and report on plans for rebuilding which would preserve the essential features of the House.

It was a theme on which this foremost among "House of Commons men" spoke with affection as well as authority, and the House enjoyed and appreciated his finely phrased reflections on its own status and lively sallies on its idiosyncrasies. He linked the physical shape of the Chamber with the characteristics which had distinguished the Commons throughout the centuries. "We shape our buildings, and afterwards they shape us," he began, and spoke of two main characteristics of the House of Commons which commanded the approval and the support of reflective and experienced members.

"The first is that its shape should be oblong and not semi-circular. Here is a very potent factor in our political life. The semi-circular assembly, which appeals to political theorists, enables every individual or every group to move round the centre, adopting the various shades of pink according

as the weather changes. But I am a convinced supporter of the party system in preference to the group system. I have seen many earnest and ardent Parliaments destroyed by the group system. The party system is much favoured by the oblong form of the Chamber. It is easy for an individual to move through those insensible gradations from left to right, but the act of crossing the floor is one which requires serious consideration. I am well informed on this matter—because I have accomplished that difficult process not only once but twice.

The second characteristic is that it should not be big enough to contain all its members at once without overcrowding—and that there should be no question of every member having a separate seat reserved for him. . . . The essence of good House of Commons speaking is the conversational style, with the facility for quick, informal interruptions and interchanges. Harangues from a rostrum would be a bad substitute for our conversational style—in which so much of our business is done. The conversational style requires a fairly small space, and there should be on great occasions a sense of crowd and urgency. We wish to see our Parliament a strong, easy, flexible instrument of free debate. For this purpose a small Chamber and a sense of intimacy are indispensable.

The vitality and the authority of the House of Commons, and its hold upon the electorate . . . depend to no small extent upon its episodes and great moments, and upon its scenes and rows, which, as everyone will agree, are better conducted at close quarters. Destroy that hold which Parliament has upon the public mind, and which it has preserved through all these changing, turbulent times, and the living organism of the House of Commons will be greatly impaired. The House of Commons is the citadel of British liberty. . . . In this war the House of Commons has proved itself to be a rock upon which an Administration, without losing the confidence of the House, has been able to confront the most terrible emergencies. The House has shown itself able to face the possibility of national destruction with classical composure.

His Majesty's Government are most anxious and indeed resolved to ask the House to adhere firmly in principle to the structure and characteristics of the House of Commons we have known . . . I am therefore proposing in the name of his Majesty's Government that we should decide to rebuild the House of Commons on its old foundations, which are intact, and in principle within its own dimensions, and that we should utilize, so far as possible, its shattered walls."

In justification of the desirability of this early preparation while the war was still in progress, Mr. Churchill declared: "I rank the House of Commons—the most powerful assembly in the whole world—at least as important as a fortification or a battleship even in time of war." Some members were not in agreement with the Prime Minister's proposals for rebuilding, but only three voted against the motion, which was carried by a majority of 124. The Select Committee was set up on December 9, and Earl Winterton, second only to Mr. Lloyd George in length of service in the House, was chosen as the chairman.

The Home Secretary's decision, for medical reasons, to

release Sir Oswald Mosley, the former Fascist leader, from detention under Regulation 18B, and to place him instead under control akin to house arrest, provoked immediate and widespread opposition in the Labour and trade union movement. The controversy raged from the announcement of the decision on November 18 until some days after the debate in the House of Commons on December 2, when Mr. Morrison's action was upheld by a majority of 265 votes.

The first announcement stated that the Home Secretary had decided on medical grounds that it was necessary to suspend the order of detention made against Sir Oswald Mosley in May, 1940, and to order his release subject to certain security conditions. The brief, almost casual, nature of this statement, issued as it was during a short Parliamentary recess, was in part responsible for the storm of protest that arose ; in part also it was a political agitation ; but undoubtedly the decision aroused a feeling of deep resentment among the workers and there was a continuous flood of protests from all parts of the country. When Parliament reassembled on November 23 Mr. Morrison, facing a full House, explained and vindicated his action in a long statement in which he made known for the first time the unanimous medical opinion on which he had acted and the extent of the restrictions to which Sir Oswald Mosley was still to be subject.

From time to time (he said) representations had been made to him on the state of Sir Oswald Mosley's health, and consultations were arranged between the Medical Commissioner of Prisons, two prison doctors, Lord Dawson of Penn and Dr. Geoffrey Evans. The opinion of all five was that if the patient remained under conditions inseparable from detention there would be substantial risk of the thrombo-phlebitis from which he was suffering extending and producing permanent danger to health and even to life. Subject to conditions of national security he was not prepared to let anyone die in detention unnecessarily. That policy was based not on the inexpediency of making martyrs of those undeserving of the honour, but on the general principle that the extraordinary powers of detention without trial must not be used except in so far as they were essential for national security—a statement which most of the House cheered. The alternative to continued detention was the substitution of some system of control approximating to house arrest. His justification for taking this course on medical grounds was that he was satisfied that no undue risk to national security would be incurred by the release of this man, subject to stringent conditions,

This explanation had little effect in allaying the excitement. While the opinion of most M.P.s was that Mr. Morrison had made a strong case, and there was substantial support for his action as the disinterested exercise of a judicial function, there were a good many, mainly on the Labour side, who took the view that the decision was not justified by the reasons given. Mr. Morrison was placed in a difficult position by the opposition in the Labour Party and the trade unions. Even those prepared to support him felt that he had under-estimated the probable public reaction to his decision. It became apparent that there was a substantial "split" in the Labour ranks.

The National Council of Labour, after long consideration, dissociated itself from the action of the Government, and remitted the matter to its constituent bodies—the T.U.C., the Labour Party National Executive, and the administrative committee of the Parliamentary Labour Party—for further consideration.

The Labour Party executive was content to express regret at the decision "which the Home Secretary felt impelled to take"; but the T.U.C. General Council was emphatic in dissociating itself from action which it called a blunder and untimely, and demanded immediate reconsideration by the Government. The Parliamentary Labour Party, after a lively meeting at which Mr. Morrison was present and spoke vigorously, adopted by a majority vote a resolution which supported his attitude, though an official statement made it clear that this "in no way limited the rights of members to express their individual views" in the debate that was to be arranged.

The debate took place on December 2, and resulted in an unofficial motion from the Labour side, regretting a decision "which is calculated to retard the war effort and lead to misunderstanding at home and abroad," being rejected by 327 votes to 62. With the Government voted 68 members of the Labour Party, and for the motion 51; 46 Labour M.P.s. were recorded as "absent."

Lord Beaverbrook, who had rejoined the Government as Lord Privy Seal, was assisting the Prime Minister at the beginning of October in the preparation for a conference of the Dominions and India on civil air transport, and presided over the meetings which began in London on October 11. The chief task of the delegates was to see if it was possible to agree on a common air policy for the Empire. A debate in the House of Lords on October 20 gave him the first opportunity of stating the Government's

views since he had assumed office and the Empire air conference had been held.

Lord Beaverbrook ventured a personal opinion that perhaps 2,000 aeroplanes would be engaged in civil aviation in Great Britain after the war. In regard to Empire development, he said, we must collaborate with the Dominions, India and the Colonies. We would not develop a viewpoint in the Commonwealth on these issues which would be exclusive to other interests or directed against them.

The conference sat for two and a half days and the talks had been conducted with representatives of India, the Dominions, and the Colonies. The conversations were necessarily of an exploratory and informatory character; the conference could in no sense commit any of the Governments concerned, and their conclusions could only be of a provisional nature. But, with all those qualifications, the conference reached unanimous agreement on every issue presented to them. Those issues were adequate for testing Empire opinion in relation to Empire civil aviation. The Government hoped to go forward at once to an international conference. That was their expectation and intention. This must wait on the United States of America, and on Russia, which was engaged on the battle front, and there might be on that account some delay. But if the Dominion Governments approved of what transpired at the conference, then the Government were ready with a plan—an extensive plan and a complete plan. He also stated that the Prime Minister and President Roosevelt had conversations on civil aviation. They came to a considerable measure of agreement, and the policy he was laying before the House was consistent with that measure of agreement and the discussions which would take place. It included freedoms of the air, subject to certain conditions, into which he could not go then.

The House of Lords had a useful debate on October 27 on the organization of transport after the war, and particularly on the question of its co-ordination under a central authority.

The Minister of War Transport, in a speech of some significance, in which he reviewed all forms of transport, declared that the problems of co-ordination would not be solved on doctrinaire lines; the only criterion must be how transport served the needs of the nation. He spoke of the importance of the railways as a national asset, both in war and peace; of the dangers of competition when carried so far as to undermine the stability of essential services; and of the road-rail problem as the main one that must be solved, both for trade and industry and for national defence. In regard to road transport he had placed before the Government definite proposals for road construction and maintenance which were related to location of industry and town and country planning. He indicated also that his Department and the leaders of the various branches of the transport industry were engaged in discussions.

There was an interesting debate on November 2 in the House of Lords on the issue raised by Mr. Curtin, the Australian Prime Minister, in the statement that "the Mother Country could not manage the Empire on the

basis of a Government sitting in London." General agreement was expressed on the importance of closer continuous consultation on defence and foreign policy between the countries of the British Commonwealth. Viscount Cranborne, Secretary of State for Dominion Affairs, described the existing machinery of communication and consultation between the Governments and the Commonwealth as extremely effective, but said that the British Government did not regard it as perfect or unchangeable, and were always ready to consider improvements.

Answering some of the proposals that had been made in public discussion outside the House, and which he said went very far, Lord Cranborne emphasized that the Dominions were sovereign nations, and neither they nor the United Kingdom would consider transferring the responsibility of their own Governments to some superior body. Mr. Curtin's proposal was far more realistic, and, as he understood it, was in the nature of a consultative body. Mr. Churchill had said that such spacious issues would be appropriate for an Imperial Conference or a meeting of Dominion Prime Ministers. Another attempt had been made to get such a meeting while General Smuts was here, but unfortunately it had not been found possible. His Majesty's Government ardently desired such a meeting and hoped that an early opportunity for it would occur.

The Government were pressed in the House of Lords on November 10 to introduce legislation empowering local authorities to acquire compulsorily at prices on the 1939 level areas needed for replanning and reconstruction, and to give authorities the right of entry in advance of settlement claims. They accepted in principle a motion to this effect moved by Lord Balfour of Burleigh, but no definite indication was given of when the Bill to implement Government pledges on these matters would be brought in. Lord Snell repeated the assurances that Government pledges in relation to the Uthwatt report would be fulfilled. Everyone knew what was desirable, he said; the Government could only promise what they decided was practicable.

The King, who was accompanied by the Queen, opened the ninth Session of the present Parliament on November 24. In Parliamentary history the occasion was notable for a break with a custom which had continued for three centuries or more. The "searching of the vaults," the traditional preliminary to a State opening,

was performed on this occasion by Home Guards of the Palace of Westminster Company, wearing battle dress and steel helmets, in the place of the Yeomen of the Guard who had hitherto done this duty.

The Speech from the Throne began with references to the mounting scale of the Allied offensive and foreshadowed a still greater weight of attack on the enemy in the coming year, and proceeded :

My Government will continue to concentrate their powers and energies upon the prosecution of the war ; and, until final victory is won, that will be their primary task. At the same time My Ministers are resolved that, so far as the future can be foreseen, they shall be ready to meet the different tasks that await them when victory has been won. They have undertaken a special review of the problems which are likely to arise as hostilities in Europe come to an end, and of the adjustments which will have to be made when we turn to prosecute with fresh vigour the war against Japan ; and in the months to come My Ministers will complete their provisional plans for the period of transition through which we must pass before the troubled times of war give place to settled conditions of peace. It will be the primary aim of My Government to ensure that in this period food, homes and employment are provided for My people, that good progress is made with the rebuilding of our damaged cities, and that in industry, mining and agriculture a smooth transition is made from war to peace. For some of these purposes fresh powers will be needed ; and, as the preparations proceed, proposals for the necessary legislation will be laid before you.

In certain fields (the Speech continued) it was already possible to look beyond the transitional period and to frame proposals for social reforms. There would be a measure embodying proposals for the reconstruction of the national system of education in England and Wales ; the Government would present their proposals regarding an enlarged and unified system of social insurance and a comprehensive health service, and they would decide, in the light of Parliamentary discussions, what specific proposals for legislation on these matters could be brought forward ; there would be legislation conferring special powers for the re-development of areas which, by reason of enemy action, over-crowding or otherwise, need to be re-planned as a whole ; and the Government would present the results of their examination of the Reports recommending the assumption of further powers to control and direct the use of the land.

The Address of Thanks in reply to the Gracious Speech was moved in the House of Lords by Viscount Cowdray, and seconded by the Marquis of Normanby, recently repatriated from a prisoners of war camp in Germany, whose work there in alleviating the lot of blinded British soldiers was sincerely acknowledged. In the House of Commons the Address was moved by Lieut.-Commander Brabner, home from distinguished service in the Fleet Air Arm, who made an eloquent plea for the future of the

young men serving in the Forces. Mr. George Griffiths, Labour representative of a constituency devoted to mining and agriculture, paid tribute in homely phrases to the efforts of the workers in these two industries.

A note of criticism on the loss of Leros ran through the debates in both Houses, and while there was general approval that the Government were looking ahead, there was criticism, too, on the absence of definite proposals in regard to employment, the Beveridge plan for social security, and the use of the land. Mr. Pethick-Lawrence, speaking for the Labour Party, complained of the prospect of "an endless vista" of White Papers and procrastination, with little hope of action, held out by the King's Speech. For the prosecution of the war, in which all had a common purpose, the Coalition remained essential, he said, but if so-called unity among the parties meant inaction in home policy he had no use for it.

Mr. Attlee, the Deputy Prime Minister, forecast extended sittings of Parliament in view of the tasks ahead. He did not make any lengthy review of the war, but told the House of the continued success of the fight against the U-boats. He did not seek to minimize the setback in the Dodecanese, but claimed that the opportunity had been taken to harass Germany and help the Italians by forcing the Germans to disperse their forces. We had taken a risk, and lost by only a small margin. The responsible commanders decided to hold on to the islands, and had the support of the Government. Answering the criticisms of delay in the domestic sphere, Mr. Attlee denied that the alleged delays were due to political differences within the Government, and asserted that the cause lay in the inherent difficulties presented by the many problems involved. There must be the greatest amount of assent—which did not imply any lack of vigour—in preparing plans to be put into operation as soon as the war ended; no party could get all it wanted.

The need for planning for post-war conditions in many fields, social and economic, formed a recurrent theme, with specific aspects of war operations, during the second day's debate. Mr. Shinwell gained the attention of the House for an objective speech in which he declared that, allowing for the possibility of international co-operation, the strength of Great Britain in the future *vis-à-vis* the United States and Russia must be an even better economic understanding with the countries of the British Commonwealth, which should align themselves with the Western nations of Europe.

Mr. Lyttelton, speaking for the Government, commented on the significance of the great attention that had been paid to post-war domestic problems. It would bring no comfort to the enemy, since it meant that victory over him was certain and imminent. He admitted that he would have shared the impatience of the House in regard to social security had he not been aware, as a member of the Ministerial Committee concerned, of the great complexity of the subjects involved. The bulk of the problem had been tackled, however, and a White Paper was being drafted. On the subject of town and country planning, he said that in the main the Government accepted the recommendations of the Uthwatt Report concerning procedure for the acquisition of land for reconstruction purposes; but in regard to the acquisition of development rights and the periodic levy on increases in site value, he had to admit—and did so, he said, unashamedly—that the Government had not yet made up their minds, and alternatives were being examined.

These topics were concentrated in the debate on December 7 on the official Labour Party amendment to the Address. It was a moderately phrased motion, which regretted :

"the admission implicit in the Gracious Speech that Your Majesty's advisers have not yet reached definite decisions as to the nature of the legislative and administrative action which should be taken during the coming session as part of the policy of post-war reconstruction, covering the control of land in the public interest, the provision of employment, social security as envisaged in the Report of Sir William Beveridge on social insurance and allied services, and the economic changes rendered necessary in the new conditions which will emerge in peace."

Mr. Greenwood, deputy leader of the Party, was unfortunately ill with influenza, and the motion was moved by Mr. A. Barnes. He described the Government as a great war Government but a very timid post-war reconstruction Government, and assailed their indecision as holding up essential preparatory work. Somewhat similar opinions were expressed by Conservative members, Viscount Hinchinbrooke asserting that there was a general opinion that the Government were behind the times and inclined to let their anxiety to maintain the Coalition go too far, with the result that half-hearted and uninspiring programmes were produced after a nice internal balancing of political pros and cons. Mr. J. R. Clynes made one of his now rare interventions in debate to castigate strikers who, in defiance of trade union leadership and counsel, were holding up vital war industry. Sir George Schuster spoke of necessary changes in the structure of industry, and called for a union of effort on the part of the Government and private industry towards the common end of making the most of the nation's productive power. Sir William Jowitt, Minister without Portfolio, replied for the Government. He indicated that on "the shape of things to come" the time for preparatory work—of which he had had charge—was at an end, and the time for decisions had come.

The debates on the Address in the Commons continued over eight days. The subjects selected for discussion included Imperial affairs, State servants' pensions, world food supplies, common ownership, the location of industry, and demobilization.

The amendment moved by Sir Richard Acland, leader of the Common Wealth Party, with the support of Mr. Maxton, the I.L.P. Leader, was chiefly notable for the fact that its sponsors chose to construe it as a motion of censure and carry it to a division. The amendment, regretting that "His Majesty's advisers did not realize that private ownership of all substantial resources must now be supplanted by common ownership if future wars and poverty were to be eliminated and human brotherhood more nearly approached," was decisively rejected by 246 votes to 10.

The last amendment of the debate provided a brief but interesting discussion on demobilization. Moved by Mr. Turton, it was a formal expression of regret that the principles had not been announced on which the demobilization of the armed Forces at the conclusion of hostilities would be based. Several of those who spoke thought that the simple formula "first in, first out," would need to be applied according to various qualifications, and some favoured a demobilization based on a "points scheme" in which personal circumstances as well as the needs of the State would be evaluated.

Mr. McCorquodale, Parliamentary Secretary, Ministry of Labour, told the House that the Government's plan for demobilization were very far advanced, and were before a committee of the War Cabinet. Although some final decisions had still to be taken, a sudden and unexpected collapse of Germany, for example, would not catch them unprepared. Responsibility for the speedy and satisfactory resettlement of the demobilized men and women lay squarely on the shoulders of the Government, and they were firmly resolved that so far as lay in their power the first visit of the men and women to the employment exchanges should be to get a job and not to draw the dole. It was the Government's intention that age and length of service should be the framework within which the plans were worked out.

The Commons debate, important though it was, was to some extent over-shadowed by the knowledge that the new Minister of Reconstruction was to speak in the House of Lords on the following day. This was Lord Woolton's first speech in his new office, and he told with candour and directness how he approached his task. To those who had expressed doubts lest his powers might prove inadequate he answered that if they should prove insufficient he would not attempt to do the job, but he had the unqualified assurance of the Prime Minister's support, and he was content with that. He explained that there was to be no Ministry of Reconstruction, since primary responsibility for formulating plans must continue to rest with the Departments concerned. His part would be to see that the plans as a whole were brought into coherence, and to ensure that work on them proceeded apace. In this he would be helped by a strong Cabinet Committee, over which he would preside.

Surveying the prospect before him by subjects, Lord Woolton pointed to the many commissions that had been set up, and from which reports—

detailed, and some very persuasive—had been received. But the Government could not contract out of its responsibilities by appointing commissions. The Government would be failing in their duty if they merely swallowed the reports whole.

Full employment was the foundation of social security. To ensure work for the nation was where reconstruction started. If this country was to rebuild its commercial life and be able to afford to give social security to its people, it would need to work very hard. After expressing the view that planning would be done more surely if the co-operation of the people was secured by placing the facts before them—obligations as well as rewards—and that it was not the Government's "new world" that was to be built, but the people's, Lord Woolton appealed to the practical common sense and united effort of the whole nation, industrialists and workpeople, for the same sense of national devotion and subjugation of self-interest in the period of reconstruction as they had shown when the country was in danger. For some years to come we should be a nation which was poor in wealth, although rich beyond dreams in reputation.

Land policy must be settled without any delay at all. He thought that in the temper of to-day all parties were determined to put the State before party and there were high hopes of a permanent settlement that would be fair to everyone. It was a very controversial subject, but it would be agreed that the proper development of land should not be prevented by motives of personal gain or selfishness. Plans would be laid before Parliament at a very early date.

In general, the new Minister's speech created a good impression. The succeeding discussions, while not wholly uncritical, were marked by the goodwill that, mixed with much advice, was proffered to Lord Woolton. Their range was wide. The place of the medical profession in planning for the future was the subject of a speech by Lord Horder, who expressed confidence that the medical profession was anxious to assist in implementing Assumption B of the Beveridge Report that all the preventive and curative knowledge and skill of medicine should be available to every citizen. Other matters mentioned were agriculture, housing difficulties, financial and trade policy, nutrition, and the importance of maintaining family life.

Winding up the debate, Lord Woolton suggested that, if he were willing to undertake the responsibilities of his post with the powers which the Prime Minister had given him, others need not be unduly concerned about his powers as a Minister. If he failed it would be from lack of capacity. He declined to be drawn into political controversy, and intended to remain completely outside the political parties. That was his value. He was going into a mass of problems under the heading of reconstruction which had been the elements of party politics for a very long time. If as a neutral member he could get a general agreement between all men of good will, not on the whole of the programmes, but something that would help the country in the next few years, that would be of value.

Parliament was given a first hand exposition of the three Middle East Conferences by Mr. Eden on December 14. He addressed a crowded House, and full Diplomatic Galleries heard him. He began by giving the House a message of regret for absence from the Prime Minister, for whom "there was still important work to do in the sphere where he now was."

Into the three very strenuous weeks, as Mr. Eden described them, had been compressed three conferences of world significance, any one of which in the ordinary leisured times of diplomacy would have taken a full month.

"These meetings between the three men who bear the chief responsibility in their respective countries must be a rare event," he said. "Their value can hardly be exaggerated. They imposed a considerable additional burden on those who travelled to or took part in them. I do not believe even the Prime Minister, ardent though we know him to be for work, has ever devoted more hours of the day, and, alas, of the night, to unremitting labour during these conferences."

Mr. Eden described the work of the three conferences in turn, dealing first with the Cairo conference for the prosecution of the war against Japan. Like the Teheran Conference it was taken up with military matters, and it had been possible to bring these matters to a state of complete and collective preparation far exceeding anything that had hitherto been realized in this war. That conference, he went on, had certain special features. It gave the Prime Minister, for instance, his first opportunity of meeting Generalissimo and Mme. Chiang Kai-Shek. It was also the first time the President had met the Generalissimo.

"It was a most memorable experience when the Prime Minister took his guests and Admiral Mounbatten (in charge of the Eastern theatre of operations in India) into his map room where, for some hours, we dived deep into war plans and projects."

He paid a high personal tribute to the Chinese Generalissimo under whose "outward gentleness and gracefulness . . . there is a core of supple steel" and to Mme. Chiang Kai-Shek, equally determined and "always there to help us with her sagacious counsel, her unrivalled experience of East and West and her brilliant gifts as an interpreter." He added that after our military mission had agreed upon future military operations against Japan "we thought it well to set out the political principles for which we are fighting." This explained the declaration that followed the close of the conference.

"Let me emphasize" (Mr. Eden continued) "that the war with Japan is not one in which we in this country are playing a part of benevolent assistance.

Even if we are compelled for the time being to devote the greater part of our human and material resources to the task of defeating Germany we are still principals in the Far Eastern war. Japan is just as great a menace to the security of the British Commonwealth as she is to the security of either the United States or China. . . . We should be utterly unworthy of our heritage and traditions if we did not at the earliest possible moment deploy all our resources for the purpose of establishing their security on a firm basis. For that we have to fight Japan to the bitter end, whatever the cost and however long it takes."

Mr. Eden was confident that the meeting between the leaders of the three great Powers had been of the greatest service in the political as well as the military sphere. He had discussed post-war collaboration between Britain and China, both in policy and in conduct. He had told our Chinese friends that it was the desire of Britain that that collaboration should be as close and cordial as possible, and had found that to be their attitude also, and was confident of steady progress being made in these spheres.

Part of what Mr. Eden said of the Teheran Conference, and of the subsequent talks at Cairo with the President of the Turkish Republic has been recorded in the first Chapter of this volume. A mention of the conversations which the Prime Minister and he had in Cairo with British Ministers, Mr. Harold Macmillan and Sir Edward Spears, on the trouble that had developed in Lebanon, and a fortuitous meeting at Algiers—due to engine trouble—which Mr. Eden had with both M. Massigli and General Catroux, prefaced a message of encouragement to the people of France, which the House endorsed with a cheer.

"The suffering of the French people has been harsh and cruel. France has spent a long ordeal which, but for the hazard of geography, the British people might have had to share. We believe that this great people . . . will find the spirit to lift them up again. We believe that in the Colonial and French forces in Tunisia and Libya, of which I have heard from our own officers who served with them, and in the heroic and ever-increasing resistance movement in France . . . we have the real soul of France."

What he had thus said also applied to all nations under German occupation, Mr. Eden added, before proceeding to a review of affairs in the Balkans. The House was here surprised and greatly interested to learn that the British Military Mission to General Tito was led by one of their members, Brigadier F. H. R. Maclean, M.P. Members were at first a little puzzled by the identity of "the member for Lancaster," especially as since his election he had been so closely occupied with his military duties that he had rarely been seen in the House.

Lastly, Mr. Eden gave the House the latest official information on the fighting in Italy and after summing up the work of the three conferences as constituting "a message of good cheer," added the warning that the very magnitude of the plans to which the Allied Governments had set their hands would call for an immense effort from all the United Nations. "We have set ourselves a hard task in our determination to achieve victory at the earliest possible date. Great battles are impending. For this effort we

shall need all our strength, all our courage, all our unity in greater measure perhaps than ever before," and he asked the House to give the pledge that that effort would be forthcoming.

The gratification of members at Mr. Eden's arduous efforts and safe return was expressed by Mr. Greenwood, and warmly cheered. The House also generally approved his sympathetic reference to France. In a second speech which ended the debate Mr. Eden assure Parliament that no postponement or lessening of our bombing of Germany was contemplated, and that it had a high place in the plans for the coming year. He stressed what he had said about the conferences, how they had laid the foundation of a new international order, and repeated that while he was not sure six months ago that there was a foundation on which we, Russia and the United States could work, he was now sure that there was.

The address which General Smuts delivered at the House of Commons to the Empire Parliamentary Association on November 28 aroused much Parliamentary and public discussion for some time afterwards. It was an example of "thinking aloud" which many regarded as untimely, and the General himself observed, "I call this very explosive stuff, but we are living in a very explosive world."

The following were the main points in his speech :

He doubted whether we should ever come to a peace conference at all at the end of the war. We might be faced with questions "so vast, so complicated, so difficult and intractable, that . . . we shall have to be satisfied with making a pretty comprehensive armistice dealing with the general military question of ending the war, and leave the rest of the problems to a long series of conferences, to a long process of working out solutions without coming to any general peace conference at all."

He spoke of the dangers in a complex world of over-simplification, which falsified the real character of the problems before us and of following slogans and catchwords, and so missing the real inwardness of these problems. Amplifying his warning about the second danger he said that both sides were following slogans and catchwords, "Democracy and freedom" on one side, the "leader-principle" on the other. Practical solutions could only be reached if there were a good mixture of democracy and freedom with leadership. "Freedom, like patriotism, is not enough." The slogan of "the balance of power" had been abandoned after the last war for the formula of a universal all-in system of security and idealism, embodied in the League of Nations. This war had taught us that idealism was not enough and that "we cannot get away from the problem of power." The question of power remained fundamental and that was, perhaps, the great lesson of the war. In arranging for a new world organization of security "we shall have to provide not only for freedom and democracy which are essential

but also for leadership and power." This could be done more effectively than in the Covenant of the League of Nations by giving a proper place to the three great Powers now leading the United Nations, Great Britain, the United States and Russia. These three Powers must retain the leadership in war and peace and must in the first instance "be responsible for the maintenance of security and the preservation of world-peace."

He then turned to "explosive things, for which I hope you will not hold me responsible hereafter. The old Europe had gone. By the end of this war three of the five Great Powers in Europe would have disappeared. France has gone, and if ever she returns, it will be a hard and a long upward pull for her to emerge again." A nation that has once been overtaken by such a catastrophe would not easily resume her old place again. . . . "France has gone, and will be gone in our day and perhaps for many a day."

Italy had disappeared, perhaps for ever, as a Great Power and Germany at the end of this war will have disappeared, perhaps never again to emerge in the old form. "The Germans are a great people . . . but after the smash that will follow this war Germany will be written off the slate in Europe for long, long years." Only Great Britain and Russia would be left. Russia was "the new Colossus in Europe" and her rise was one of the great phenomena in history. Her power would be still greater because the Japanese Empire will have gone the way of all flesh and there will be no check on her in the East.

Great Britain at the end of the war will have "a glory and an honour and a prestige such as perhaps no nation has ever enjoyed . . . recognized as possessing a greatness of soul that has entered into the very substance of world history. But from a material . . . point of view she will be a poor country. She has put in her all. This country has held nothing back . . . She has put body and soul and everything into it to win the battle of mankind. She will have won it but she will come out of it poor in substance."

Outside Europe you will have the United States, the other great world Power. A closer union between the United States and the British Commonwealth appeared to many minds among the great hopes for mankind but as a political Axis it would be a one-sided affair, and to pit these two Powers against the rest would make a "very lop-sided world." The trinity of the United States, Great Britain and Russia was the "solution for the present and the near foreseeable future." But in that trinity there would be two partners of vast power and resources, while Britain would be weak in her European resources by comparison. "The idea has repeatedly floated before my mind . . . whether Great Britain should not strengthen her European position, apart from her position as the centre of this great Empire and Commonwealth outside Europe, by working closely together with those smaller democracies in Western Europe" which, he pointed out, resembled Britain in their outlook and way of life.

The Commonwealth system opened the door for such a development and stood the greatest possible strain. It was for these nations to say whether, in the world as they had learned to know it, they could safely continue in the old paths of isolation and neutrality or whether they should help themselves by helping to create by closer union with Great Britain a great European State . . . great oversea and great on the Continent, an equal partner with the other Colossi in the leadership of the nations.

As to the Empire and Commonwealth there was a dual system, decentralization in the Commonwealth, centralization focussed in London, in the Empire. This system might not endure in the future. It seemed to him a feasible proposition to group the British colonies and territories in Africa

in larger units and abolish not a few which need not enjoy a separate existence. These larger colonial groups when reorganized might thus be brought closer to a neighbouring Dominion, and the Dominions instead of taking little interest in the Empire would become sharers and partners therein.

Finally, after emphasizing that he wished to see "our group" strengthened and co-ordinated with a better prospect of co-operation and collaboration between all its parts, he concluded, "I want us on the future paths of history to have a fair, clean run, because I think we mean a great deal to the world . . . Surely people all over the world will look to this group . . . comprising one-fourth of the human race, and see how they guide their destinies in peace and war along human lines of mutual helpfulness. . . ."

Such "explosive stuff," coming from a member of the War Cabinet, disturbed Parliament and public discussion for some time. It was asked whether its publication was expedient, and General Smuts's place in the War Cabinet was a factor which for the public tended to outweigh his own description of his speech as "an informal talk." Mr. Attlee, replying to questions in the House, said the speech was not intended to be a statement of Government policy, but it was "a valuable contribution to the examination of post-war problems."

Parliament shared with especial concern the surprise and regret with which the whole country learned on December 16 of the illness of the Prime Minister, still absent in North Africa. The last news they had received of him was from Mr. Eden, who had reported that he had left Mr. Churchill "in good health and confident spirits, though perhaps a little tired." The first news of Mr. Churchill's illness was given in this statement issued from 10 Downing Street :

The Prime Minister has been in bed for some days with a cold. A patch of pneumonia has now developed in the left lung. His general condition is as satisfactory as can be expected.

The bulletin was signed by Lord Moran, the Prime Minister's personal physician, who had travelled with him to the Middle East, Brigadier D. Evan Bedford, and Lt.-Col. R. J. V. Pulvertaft. It was dated Dec. 15:

The House of Commons heard the news from Mr. Attlee, Deputy Prime Minister, who, after announcing that further bulletins would be issued daily, proceeded :

The House will be sorry to learn that the Prime Minister is in this condition. It will be the desire of all of us that we should send our best wishes

for his recovery. I may add that highly qualified specialists are in attendance, and the House will observe that the bulletin is signed not only by Lord Moran, but also by Brigadier Bedford and Lieut-Col. Pulvertaft, who are consulting Physician and Director of Pathology, respectively, to the Middle East Forces. I can assure the House that every modern facility is available on the spot.

National and international solicitude over Mr. Churchill's illness was expressed in numerous messages and comments, in which reference was made to his arduous labours in the cause of the United Nations, and the great strain of the long journeys which he had undertaken and the vital conferences wherein he had been engaged. *The Times* wrote in a leading article on December 17 :

Not in the British Empire only, but among the fighters and workers for freedom all round the globe the news . . . will be received with profound regret. This is the second attack of pneumonia that the Prime Minister has undergone within 12 months. The first followed as closely upon the Casablanca Conference as this does upon Cairo and Teheran ; and the coincidence precludes any doubt that both are the direct consequence of war service. Although Mr. Churchill's vigour of intellect and spirit are inseparably bound up with a robust constitution, there can be no doubt of the tax imposed upon his physical strength by the labours he has undertaken. He has made himself the most mobile of the heads of the Allied Governments.

The bulletin of December 17 stated that there had been no spread in the pneumonia, and that the improvement in the Prime Minister's general condition had been maintained. It was made known the same day that Mrs. Churchill had left the country to be with the Prime Minister during his illness and convalescence. Happily the illness took a normal course, and succeeding bulletins reported that the Prime Minister was making satisfactory progress and gathering strength. On December 29 came a heartening message from Mr. Churchill himself, announcing that he was leaving "for an unknown destination," and declaring that he felt much better than at any time since leaving England, though a few weeks in the sunshine were necessary to restore his physical strength.

It also disclosed that he had planned to visit the Italian front as soon as the conferences were over, but on December 11 felt so tired that he had to ask for a few days' rest ; the next day came the fever. The message ended with this assurance—"I have not at any time had to relinquish my part in the direction of affairs, and there has not been the slightest delay in giving the decisions which were required of me. I am now able to transact business fully . . . and am in full daily correspondence with London, and though I shall be resting for a few weeks I shall not be idle."

CHAPTER X

FUEL AND FOOD

There was no improvement of output from the coal-mines during the quarter. After the collapse of the miners' strike in Lanarkshire in early October there was fairly general peace in the industry until the end of the first week in November. Then came strikes in several Lancashire collieries. On November 15 Sir Robert Burrows, Chairman of the Lancashire Associated Collieries Ltd., told the Press that the directors

"did not know from any official notification that any dispute existed." On that day 12,000 miners were on strike. The union, were not co-operative, according to Sir Robert Burrows, who said that while they urged the men to return, they added sentences about terrible grievances. These apparently concerned the wages of haulage hands, which were from 62 to 102 per cent above pre-war figures for underground workers and from 65 to 106 per cent for surface workers. Except in the case of one age group these wages were above the national awards.

After a few days during which 2,000 miners struck in Durham in sympathy with a youth who had been imprisoned for refusing to pay a fine imposed for his refusal to work underground, the Lancashire strikers went back to work. Their action had caused a loss of 40,000 tons of coal.

Irritating as these unofficial strikes were, the loss which they caused was estimated by the Prime Minister on the basis of official figures as "no more than . . . two-thirds of .05 per cent." After telling Parliament this in the coal debate on October 13, he went on to say that the figure for wilful absenteeism was slightly under 5 per cent.¹ What most troubled public opinion was the extreme indiscipline of a minority of miners, especially among the younger men, who paid not the slightest regard to majority decisions and struck for reasons which often seemed trivial. Another cause of public concern was the steady

¹ See also Chapter IX, Section 2, for the debate.

decline of the output of the elder men. This was inevitable. They were growing older, and what with rationing, black-out and a general mental and physical fatigue they could not be expected to maintain, much less raise, their output. The 720,000 men, the Government's level of man-power for the mines, were not raising enough coal individually to produce the 4,200,000 tons a week which was the official estimate of national requirements. To meet this situation Mr. Bevin on December 2 informed Parliament of the Government's intention to impose the compulsory recruitment of young men, who would be taken by numerical ballot. The main features of this scheme have been outlined in the preceding chapter of this volume.

The ballot for the direction to the coal-mines of men born on and after January 1, 1918, who are registered under the National Service Act, and who would otherwise be called up for service with the Forces, took place at the Ministry of Labour and National Service on December 14 in the presence of Mr. Bevin, Major Gwilym Lloyd George, and Mr. R. A. Butler. It was stated that men thus selected for coalmining work would be required to undergo a period of preliminary training at one of the special training centres before being allocated to a working colliery. No directions to undergo training would be sent out before January 1.

On October 7 the executive committee of the Mineworkers' Federation communicated the Federation's proposals to increase the output of the mines to Major Lloyd George. They asked for

The release of more men from the Fighting Services, Civil Defence and industry.

The abolition of "dual control" and the assumption of full financial and operational control by the Government so that colliery managers and supervisory technicians may become the direct servants of the State.

A strengthening of the pit committees and a more effective liaison with the regional authorities.

Acceleration of mechanization and a high priority for mining supplies; improvement of equipment, especially conveyor belts. Minimum wages of £6 a week for men working underground and £5 10s. for adult surface workers; consequential adjustments of piece rates and a review of the Porter award for youths.¹

The Mineworkers' Federation also outlined a long-term policy for the industry which included (a) immediate legislation governing hours of work after the war; (b) guarantees of Government control of the disposal and price of coal both inland and export based on an international arrangement for which provision should be made in the peace treaty; (d) erection of pit-head baths and canteens or snack bars at all collieries, the programme

¹The minima at the time were 83s. for underground workers and 75s. weekly for surface workers.

to be completed within ten years of the termination of the war ; (e) a comprehensive workmen's compensation scheme on the lines suggested by the Federation to the Royal Commission ; (f) new safety measures with special provision for dust suppression ; (g) extension of scientific research on coal utilization.

Other suggestions included the overhaul of transport arrangements and here the Federation complained that men were paying up to 10s. weekly for transport to and from their work, a substantial improvement of the holidays with pay scheme and the basing of the output bonus scheme on the individual pit. The Federation concluded in favour of state ownership of the mines. "The industry," said the statement, "is suffering from a number of accumulating factors that cannot be wholly solved as long as the ownership of the industry remains in private hands. The responses that are required by the nation from the men cannot be forthcoming unless the workmen can be assured that the benefits of these responses do not accrue to the colliery companies."

The statement did not attempt to explain how State ownership would influence regularity of attendance and the amount of output. The public also noted that although the miners' leaders were now asking for a large increase of the minimum wage the same leaders had assured the country less than 18 months earlier (when the Greene tribunal issued its award) that their grievances had been redressed and that they accepted their responsibilities to the nation ; it remembered that a conference of delegates held in June, 1942, had appealed to the miners to do their utmost "now that the wage issue has been settled," and that at the annual conference of the Federation in July, 1942, Mr. W. Lawther, its president, had said among other things :

National control, increases of wages, a national minimum, and a national board bring us definite rights but they also bring us new duties and responsibilities. We have to accept the task and give the country the coal it needs. . . . If we fail it will be a long day before the nation again listens in patience to any of our proposals."

Meanwhile the Greene tribunal of investigation into the wages and conciliation machinery of the coalmining industry had recommended in its fourth and final report the substitution of a pit scheme of output bonus for the district scheme. The delegate conference of the Mine-workers' Federation met on November 26 and postponed any decisions on the main problems before it until January, when it would meet to hear what progress the Executive Committee of the Federation had made in its discussions

with the Government. Mr. Lawther complained of the Government's delay in reaching any decisions. On December 1, Major Lloyd George, speaking at Preston, said that he had been authorized by the Government to submit to the industry a number of proposals affecting the war-time organization of the mines, discipline, and a wide range of matters touching the miners' welfare. The discussion opened on December 10, and on December 21 it was stated that the miners' leaders had accepted in principle the Minister's proposals for group control of output. This would be effected by segregating all pits within each area into groups, each group

"being under the supervision of a group production director who would be a State servant appointed by the Minister and reporting to the regional controller. . . . The meeting also discussed the manpower position of the industry when the federation representatives again pressed for the return of ex-miners at present in the services and in other war industries. . . ." The Minister reminded them that 60,000 ex-miners had been returned from these sources during the past two years and that more were to come, but the Government could not permit further withdrawals of trained service men and key men in industries beyond the present scheme. On December 23 it was announced that the Mining Association, the colliery owners' organization, had accepted the Minister's scheme for group control.

On November 15 the result of a ballot taken in the Scottish coalfields to obtain the miners' views for or against the proposal to amalgamate the existing district unions of Scotland in a single union was announced by Mr. A. Moffat, president of the National Union of Scottish Mineworkers. The miners had supported the principle of a single union for all Scotland by a 16 to one majority.

Food There were no changes in the prices of *milk* and *bread* during the quarter. It was announced in October that the Ministry of Food hoped to save fully 400,000 gallons of petrol a year by rationalizing wholesale deliveries of bread. The Ministry of Food let it be known in October that it would not reduce the meat ration below 1s. 2d. per head weekly, except under pressure of extreme necessity. Larger stocks of imported *pork* were available in England and Wales during Christmas week than during the corresponding week of 1942, but they were there as

part of the normal meat ration and no extra allocation of any rationed food was made. *Turkeys* were in short supply at Christmas. The ban on the sales of stock *poultry* in December, which was devised by the Food Ministry to prevent turkeys and fowls being sold, as most poultry, including geese and ducks, was being sold, above the controlled price¹ simply diverted supplies to the black market. There was a double allocation of *dried egg* during the ration period which began on December 12. Adults and juveniles were entitled to two packets each, and holders of children's ration books to four. The points cost of *tinned luncheon meat*, *pork loaf* and *ham loaf* was reduced for the month beginning on October 17. The concession was described as an effort to lessen the "biscuit rush" which persisted although *biscuits* were scarce and their points cost had been raised. The supply of fish was fairly good. To improve it still further an Essential Work Order was applied to the fishing industry from December 13.

On October 26 the Food Ministry announced variations in the prices of *potatoes* and *carrots*. The potato crop had been excellent but in order to husband it the prices of the long-keeping varieties were increased, wholesale prices 1s. per cwt. from November 5 and retail from $\frac{1}{4}$ d. to 1d. per half-stone from November 6. The wholesale prices of non-keeping varieties were reduced by 6d. per cwt. and the retail prices by $\frac{1}{4}$ d. per half-stone (7 lbs.) on the corresponding dates. The prices of standard grade carrots were announced likewise on October 26. From November 6 to January 31 the retail price for 2 lbs. would be 3d.; from February 1 to March 31, 3 $\frac{1}{2}$ d.; and from April 1 until further notice 4d. A second grade was recognized which would include cracked and "fanned" carrots. This was to ensure human consumption of inferior qualities. Concessions announced at the end of October gave the housewife greater freedom of choice between her rations of *sugar* and *preserves*. Maximum prices for *turnips*, *beetroots* and *parsnips* were prescribed by an order which came into force on November 10. Large purchases of *oranges* were made in Spain and Palestine and it was made known shortly before Christmas that the public would be able to buy up to 1 lb. per ration book early in the New Year.

On November 25 the Ministries of Agriculture and Food made a joint announcement concerning farm prices. The result was that the dairy farmer would get slightly better remuneration and the corn-grower slightly less. The additional penny a gallon which the Milk

¹ The maximum retail price of "plucked poultry" of all classes had been slightly raised from November 21.

Marketing Boards would allow did something to bring the milk producer's returns into line with those of the corn-grower. The price of all grades of fat cows would be increased by 5s. per live hundredweight from November 29 to the end of June, 1944.

The maximum price of malting *barley* was to be reduced to 25s. a cwt. and the price of millable barley and potentially millable barley to 22s. 6d. and 20s. a cwt. respectively. Acreage payment for *wheat* and *rye* was to be brought up to £4 an acre and a corresponding reduction made in the market price per cwt. No changes were proposed in the prices of *oats*, cattle other than *cows*, *sheep*, *pigs* and *poultry*. Nevertheless the Agricultural Departments and the Food Ministry jointly announced on November 29 that the price of all grades of fat bulls would be increased by 5s. per live hundredweight.

These changes met with a mixed reception and a great majority of the county branches of the National Farmers' Union protested against them and remained unappeased by Mr. Hudson's defence until the year ended.

NOTE.—An appreciation of Lord Woolton's great achievement as Minister of Food will be found in Section 2 of the preceding chapter of this volume.

CHAPTER XI

STATE FINANCE

The following amounts were subscribed during the last three months of the year 1943 and invested in (a) War Bonds, 1952-54, in Savings Bonds, 1960-70 Series "C" and in Loans free of interest; and in (b) National Savings Certificates, Defence Bonds and deposits in the Post Office and Trustee Savings Banks.

<i>Week ending</i>			(a)	(b)
October	5	....	£19,035,534	£11,503,990
„	12	....	£15,958,091	£13,078,542
„	19	....	£13,970,752	£13,446,398
„	26	....	£13,750,258	£12,328,002
November	2	....	£15,995,214	£12,337,044
„	9	....	£28,747,239	£13,733,573
„	16	....	£15,961,930	£14,028,917
„	23	....	£11,905,500	£12,015,030
„	30	....	£15,472,735	£11,124,020
December	7	....	£9,100,484	£12,274,716
„	14	....	£17,441,189	£12,312,694
„	21	....	£10,781,235	£5,968,617
„	28	....	£6,769,392	£4,779,529

A drop, especially in "Small savings" (i.e. category (b)) during the Christmas-New Year period was to be expected, but it was unusually large this time. Already Lord Kindersley, the President of the National Savings Committee, in a broadcast talk on November 8, had said that while small savings for 1943 were likely to show an increase of £115,000,000 over the previous year, there were certain disturbing aspects. Since the "Wings for Victory" weeks when small savings had averaged £18,000,000 weekly they had dropped back to an average of only £11,500,000. We ought, he said,

to make it a matter of conscience now to save as hard as we could and to lift that weekly average to £15,000,000 or £16,000,000. It looked as if the

very successes of our armed forces were leading to a relaxation of efforts on the savings front. He was not referring to small savings only. Large savings were showing the same unsatisfactory downward trend, mainly in consequence of the drop in subscriptions to Three Per Cent Savings Bonds.

It was announced on December 15 that a "Salute the Soldier" Week would be held in London from March 25 to April 1. Its main purpose would be to swell national savings. Similar Weeks would be held all over the country until July 25.

The proposals to extend the "Pay-as-you-earn" system from wage-earners to all salary earners which were pressed upon the Chancellor on October 20 (*q.v.* Chapter IX) in Parliament were generally regarded with favour in business quarters. The decision of the Chancellor of the Exchequer so to extend it was made public by him in the resumed debate on November 2 and caused great satisfaction.

The Select Committee on National Expenditure continued and extended its services to the National Finances during the quarter. Some of its principal achievements may be summarily recorded here. On October 27 it reported on the circumstances in which high rates of profit on cost were yielded by fixed price contracts for the construction of warships ordered from 1936 to 1939. These profits had been disclosed by a cost investigation ordered by the Board of Admiralty in 1941. They were remarkable. The investigation covered 32 cases, including a battleship, an aircraft-carrier, and cruisers, destroyers and submarines. It disclosed that

in one case the profit was over 80 per cent, in two cases between 70 and 80 per cent, in four cases between 40 and 70 per cent, and in seven cases between 30 and 40 per cent. The Committee "are forced to the conclusion that the knowledge possessed by the technical departments of the Admiralty in relation to the determination of contract prices calls for drastic review." It recorded, nevertheless, that the seriousness of the position disclosed had been fully realized by the Admiralty and that measures had been taken to safeguard the future.

In the fourteenth report of the session, a document of 108 pages issued on November 19, the Committee examined the methods of settling prices for war stores. The purpose of the inquiry was to see how far existing methods ensured that the Government should get "good value for their money." The report did not seem to give a direct answer to this question or to the inquiry whether in fact the Government were paying the "right price" for supplies. But it provided good reason for doubting whether economy had been as stringent as it should have been, and it found "a striking lack of uniformity" in the methods and practice of the three Supply Departments with regard to contracts. It suggested a stocktaking review of the results of present departmental methods as illustrated during four years of war.

Such a review should be conducted by a special Committee utilizing the best available experience on the side of the Government and of private business.

The Committee made some observations on the machinery of Government. While they appreciated the objections to any weakening of departmental responsibility they had been impressed by the need for some measure of "supra-departmental supervision." The Ministry of Production should be the authority responsible for supervising direct methods for encouraging efficiency; but methods employed for checking costs and settling prices could be a powerful supplementary instrument for this purpose and this function, they considered, should be vested in the Treasury. They therefore recommended the appointment to the Treasury of one or two highly qualified men to be kept free from other departmental duties and that these should be aided by an advisory panel of men with practical experience in production methods and cost-accounting, including independent chartered accountants. They drew Parliament's attention to the wider issues arising from the conflict between departmental responsibility and the need for a unified handling of national policy. The Cabinet could not exercise the required continuous supervision of the execution of Government policy as a whole and needed an instrument with which to work.

In their sixteenth report published on November 23 the Select Committee broke new ground. This report dealt with State-owned assets acquired as the result of war expenditure. It described them as of a relatively permanent character and assessed the value of a portion of the total at the impressive figure of £663,000,000. Some of the questions which the report suggested—e.g. eventual decisions as to the retention, adaptation or sale of these assets—lay outside the Committee's powers of inquiry. They were able, however, to discover that the Treasury itself was not in possession of the facts and figures concerning these assets which included buildings, plants and installations of the Ministries of Supply, Aircraft Production, Food and Works, the Admiralty, the Royal Ordnance Factory and agency and shadow factories. The Committee expressed surprise that

"in the fifth year of the war . . . no central assembly of records has been undertaken, but . . . no instructions have been given to departments to ensure that their inventories are so kept that they can be fitted into a common scheme." They considered that immediate attention should be given to this subject to avoid waste and confusion at the end of the war. The decisions that must eventually be taken with regard to these properties would clearly transcend the bounds of the individual departments by which these assets were for the moment controlled.

The public shared their surprise, and the more important organs of the Press supported their recommendations.

CHAPTER XII

THE DOMINIONS

Eire Mr. de Valera twice referred publicly to the neutrality of Eire during the quarter. In the Dail on November 16 he said that the country had chosen neutrality with full recognition of the probability that the peoples engaged in the war were likely to hold that those not with them were against them.

Should any State after the war vent its anger on Eire the people must face that fact as they faced the present risk of attack. They could but rely on their right and the goodness of their cause and hope that God would be favourable as He had been. In a Christmas Day broadcast he warned the public against complacency and observed that their good fortune in being spared the miseries of war caused anxiety among thoughtful men who feared it might not continue and recognized that no special merit of theirs had singled them out for such a favour from Heaven.

A proposal for the control of the Great Southern Railway by the State was envisaged in a statement issued to the stockholders of the Company in October. On December 3 the Minister for Industry and Commerce announced that the Government had adopted a scheme for the reorganization of the Company's capital and that this scheme would be included in proposals for legislation that were now being prepared.

Northern Ireland Gunmen of the I.R.A. shot a policeman on October 1 while he escorted a clerk with the weekly pay-roll from a bank to a mill in Falls Road. It appeared that persons who might have identified the gunmen were terrorized. It was announced later in the month that the police had discovered a number of arms caches containing *inter alia* 77 bombs and 8,000 rounds of ammunition.

Newfoundland In the debate on the address on December 3 Mr. Emrys-Evans, Parliamentary Under-Secretary for the Dominions, in referring to Newfoundland, said that the Government accepted in principle the right of the islanders to self-government. Machinery must be provided as soon as practicable after the end of the war to

enable the Newfoundlanders to examine their future and express their considered views as to the form of Government which they preferred. He outlined the Government's immediate intentions as follows :

Pending the expression of the islanders' views a vigorous attempt should be made to develop local government and to push on general reconstruction plans. A scheme for the reorganization of the fisheries was far advanced. Financially the island was now self-supporting but the conditions were manifestly abnormal and the people were not satisfied that these conditions and their present prosperity would continue. He admitted that the present situation in which the island was governed by a Commission of British civil servants was anomalous.

On December 16 at the instance of Mr. C. G. Ammon, the senior member of the Parliamentary mission which had visited the island—the other members were Sir Derrick Gunston and Mr. A. P. Herbert—there was a debate on the constitutional future and the present condition of the island. Mr. Ammon moved the following resolution :

"That this House welcomes the statement made on behalf of His Majesty's Government of the acceptance in principle of the right of Newfoundland to self-government ; and urges His Majesty's Government to give effect to such approval by taking the necessary action as soon as practicable." In support of this motion he outlined a number of proposals from which his two colleagues, though reporting separately, were understood to dissent only on points of detail. He began by saying that the mission had found that there was no agreement among Newfoundlanders as to the sort of constitution they wanted but that all wanted some form of self-government though not the form which existed before the present Commission took over. Few Newfoundlanders desired union with Canada, fewer still incorporation in the United States.

Mr. Ammon urged that for the time there should be a compromise between Commission Government and representative government. He suggested that Commissioners from this country should be nominated as before but that colleagues from Newfoundland should be elected. He advocated the establishment of a Civil Service Commission to secure the permanence of an independent civil service and prevent the reappearance of the "spoils system," the cause of many of Newfoundland's troubles. The financial system of the island needed revision. At present it imported most of its necessities and obtained most of its revenue by taxing them, thus raising the cost and lowering the standard of living. He advocated a ten-year plan of economic and general development to be financed by a British loan and carried out under the supervision of a British-trained civil service.

At the same time Mr. Ammon had sharp criticisms to make of the errors of the Commission Government. They had made "a bad kick-off" when they began by closing the Parliament House and abolishing its insignia, which gave the impression that they intended to abolish Parliament for good. They had also abolished the National Museum and none knew

where its contents had been dispersed. They had no sense of publicity and so the public had no notion of the improvements which they had brought about. The House agreed to Mr. Ammon's motion and the debate left the impression that the Government were genuinely determined to ascertain the views of the islanders as soon as the war was over.

On October 24 the Newfoundland Government announced the issue of a \$2,000,000 victory loan available to the public on November 1. The bonds selling at 99 would bear 3 per cent interest. The proceeds would be used to redeem sterling loans.

Canada On October 18 the Dominion Government launched their fifth victory loan through the National War Finance Committee and met with a prompt and generous response. The loan was for \$1,200,000,000, of which a minimum of \$525,000,000 was sought from individual subscribers, the remainder being earmarked for provincial governments, municipalities and other special interests. On December 16 Mr. J. L. Ilsley, the Minister of Finance, said that the Government had achieved a record success.

The objective had been exceeded by \$183,275,250 exclusive of conversions which exceeded \$188,000,000. The subscribers numbered 3,800,336 of whom 3,001,247 were small investors. More than \$37,500,000 had been subscribed by over 386,000 members of the armed forces whose support exceeded all expectations. Both the number of subscribers and the total subscribed were greater than was recorded in the four previous loans, and the costs of the issue were much smaller.

Relations between the United States and Canada were markedly friendly during the quarter. On November 11 Mr. King announced that the Canadian Legation in Washington would be raised to the rank of an Embassy. Mr. Leighton McCarthy, the present Minister, would be the first Canadian Ambassador to the United States. Mr. Ray Atherton, the American Minister, would become United States Ambassador at Ottawa.¹ On November 20 Mr. King issued a statement embodying the agreements reached between the U.S. and Canadian Governments in connection with the development during the war and the disposal after it of the "Canol" project which

¹The appointments became effective when the Ambassadors presented their credentials.

had been established in north-west Canada. This project

"involved the development of an oilfield at Norman Wells, on the Mackenzie River, the establishment of an oil refinery at Whitehorse, and the construction of two pipe-lines, one extending from 550 to 650 miles between Norman Wells and Whitehorse, and the other running for about 100 miles from Skagway to Whitehorse." These projects had all been developed for war purposes and construction had been proceeding since 1942. In July, 1943, enough oil had been obtained to produce several thousand barrels daily. This sufficed for the needs of the U.S. forces in Alaska and potential production had expanded since then. The Whitehorse-Skagway pipe-line was already in operation and was conveying oil brought up the coast of British Columbia by tanker for the American garrison of Alaska. The agreements between the two Governments covered the technical and other details essential to the development of these projects. The U.S. Government had contracted to purchase the entire outflow of the new oil wells during the war at an agreed price: the wells would remain part of the leasehold or permanent property of the Imperial Oil Company, a Canadian corporation, which operated them. During the war the pipe-lines and the refinery would remain the property of the U.S. Government. When the war had ended these properties would be disposed of at their commercial value and the Canadian Government would have first option to purchase them. Later (November 24) it was made known that Mr. Harold Ickes, the U.S. Secretary of the Interior, had advocated the abandonment of the "Canol" project but this was regarded in Ottawa as a dispute between Government departments in Washington, not as one between Canada and the United States.¹

The question of the supply of Canadian bacon to Great Britain aroused much public interest. When Mr. L. G. Gardiner, Minister of Agriculture, announced that the Canadian Government had undertaken to supply Britain with 900,000,000 lbs. during the next two years, as against the former contract of 675,000,000 lbs. yearly, the Press showed surprise that official policy permitted a reduction in supplies to Britain at a time when increasing supplies were being made available to Canada. It was stated, however, on December 12 that Mr. Gardiner had urged pig-farmers to make the production of 600,000,000 lbs. of bacon their target in 1944, and on December 28 it became known that the year's contract to supply 675,000,000 lbs. had been fulfilled with much to spare, and that until June at least bacon would be available in quantities sufficient to meet the amount of 600,000,000 lbs. which was considered to be the yearly minimum

¹ Summarized from messages from the Correspondent of *The Times* at Ottawa published November 22 and 25.

required to keep the British ration at its present level. It was announced at the end of the year that to enable the Government to fulfil their food undertaking to Great Britain only 200,000 cases of canned salmon would be available for Canadian consumption.

By the end of the year Canadian war production was considered to have reached its peak, and 70 per cent of all males of over 14 were then engaged in war industries, essential services, or in the armed forces. Further measures for stabilizing the cost of living at its present level were contained in an Order in Council promulgated on December 9. This was in fulfilment of an announcement made by Mr. Mackenzie King, who pointed out that the cost of living had risen by only four points during the two years in which wage control had been operative. The purposes of the new Order in Council were :

To provide for the establishment of wage rates which should incorporate the cost-of-living bonuses previously paid to compensate for the rise of prices ; to stabilize wages in order to maintain the price level ; to provide machinery for the rectification of gross inequalities and injustices in wage-rates.

Mr. Mackenzie King visited the United States where he met Mr. Cordell Hull in early December. After his return he announced (December 10) that the Canadian Legations in Russia, China and Brazil would be elevated to the rank of Embassies and the Legations of those countries in Ottawa would assume the same status.

NOTE.—Reference is made to the retirement of Lieutenant-General McNaughton from the command of the First Canadian Army in Chapter IV, Section 3, of this volume. References to Canadian military achievements and appointments will be found there and in Chapter II, Section 1.

New
Zealand

The Labour Caucus recommended that the Cabinet vacancy caused by the defeat of Mr. Barclay (Primary Production for War Purposes) should be filled by Mr. B. Roberts and that Mr. F. W. Schramm be nominated to the Speakership.

Much satisfaction was caused by the gift to the New Zealand Navy of H.M.S. *Gambia* (8,000 tons), of the crew of which three-quarters were already New Zealanders. New Zealand airmen continued to do admirable service oversea and the Dominion had sent abroad sufficient

crews to man 2,000 bombers and 1,500 fighters. Air Vice-Marshal Isitt, Chief of the New Zealand Air Staff, stated on November 29 that the air-training organization had been greatly expanded, that New Zealand was providing for the Pacific War almost all New Zealand squadrons of reconnaissance and attack bombers, fighters and flying boats, and that she would soon have dive-bomber and torpedo-bomber squadrons.

Mr. Nash, Minister of Finance, left New Zealand for the United States on December 21, by way of Australia. Mr. Sullivan, Minister of Supply, took his place during his absence. On December 28 Dr. Evatt, Australian Minister for External Affairs, announced that conversations would be held at Canberra in January between representatives of New Zealand and Australia on subjects related to the future policy of those Dominions in the south and south-west Pacific. Mr. Fraser, the Prime Minister, would lead the New Zealand delegation. Dr. Evatt said that among matters for discussion were the following :

Post-war security zones, the welfare of native peoples, the administration of island territories and communications ; and means for closer collaboration between New Zealand and Australia. He hoped that it would be possible later to hold a conference of all the Powers with territorial interests in the south-west Pacific. Permanent collaboration between Australia and New Zealand was fundamental to sound and acceptable Pacific policy.

A summary of the assistance rendered by New Zealand to the U.S. under the mutual aid agreement was given by Mr. Nash on November 12. He said that this assistance could best be assessed by the Dominion's resources.

Thus, New Zealand had provided 8,000 hospital beds out of her total of but 13,000 for U.S. service men. Many foodstuffs were in short supply owing to the diversion of production to meet American requirements. Up to September 30 New Zealand had received £47,384,000 worth of goods and services under lend-lease from the United States and had supplied goods and services valued at £24,913,000.

In spite of these strains on the national economy vigorous efforts were made to increase food supplies to Great Britain by dint of increased production and local rationing. Butter was rationed at $\frac{1}{2}$ lb. a head per week from the end of October, cream was prohibited save on production of medical certificates and the output of cheese for local consumption was to be kept at its present level.

Australia

On October 4 Mr. Curtin launched the Fourth Liberty Loan of £A125,000,000, and said that during the next six months they would spend more on the war than they had spent on the whole of the last war. In 1942-43 they had spent £A562,000,000 on the war out of a national income of £A1,223,000,000. On November 10 the Prime Minister of the Commonwealth announced that the loan had been at least fully subscribed with a record number of subscribers. On November 2 the High Commissioner for Australia announced the repayment of £12,000,000 sterling, representing advances made by the United Kingdom to the Commonwealth between July and December, 1940, to assist in meeting war commitments in Great Britain.

In an important speech on October 14 Dr. Evatt, Commonwealth Minister for External Affairs, told the House of Representatives that Australia must have a say in deciding European problems after the war. She could not "contract out of Europe."

The centre of the British Commonwealth and Empire was in Europe, all Australian immigrants had come from Europe, much of Australia's peace-time trade was with Europe and Australian culture was European. European colonies were neighbours of Australia in the Pacific and the Indian Ocean. Moreover one of the three great continental Powers, Russia, was a world Power and would be a great force in the Pacific of to-morrow. But he was against leaving the settlement of Europe exclusively in the hands of the "big three," Britain, Russia and the U.S.A. and he thought it would be unfortunate were smaller states not brought into the framework of the organized family of nations.

On December 6 Mr. Curtin made an important statement on the urgency of an increase in the *tempo* of the war against Japan. Merely to hold the Japanese back from further conquests while the European war was brought to a close would suit Japan very well.

To regard Japan as a "sideshow" was foolish and dangerous. Japanese military fanaticism supported the belief that Japan was ready to lose 5,000,000 men in a war of attrition in defence of her conquests. The Japanese Navy had yet to fight a major battle and only the Japanese air force had shown its hand. The Japanese soldier was disciplined beyond anything known in Western armies and there was no order in the Japanese Army equivalent to retreat. Japan had rich resources and a vast pool of slave labour in the 400,000,000 inhabitants of the conquered empire. Yet the Allied forces with limited resources had taken every Japanese position which they had attacked under unparalleled conditions. Given a heightened

scale of striking power they could break into the Japanese Empire before it could be exploited, then strike the inner empire and finally strike Japan herself.

Plans for a Council of Empire were much in Mr. Curtin's mind, and on December 14 at the triennial conference of the Labour Party at Canberra he outlined a plan providing for full and continuous consultation between the members of the Commonwealth.

He said that there should be frequent meetings of Dominion Prime Ministers, not necessarily always in London, and declared that the Dominions ought to be fully informed of developments in policy before decisions were taken. There should be a Standing Committee of the Imperial Conference to handle the problems arising between conferences. The Secretariat of the Imperial Conference should be established in London but should not have a fixed venue. In view of the teeming millions of coloured peoples to the north of Australia, he believed that Australia could not be governed in years to come without being harnessed to other nations. He advocated a plan of regional co-operation in the Pacific between the United Kingdom, Canada, Australia, New Zealand and other countries with parallel interests in that region.

Mr. Curtin also moved a resolution affirming Australian adherence to the principles of the Atlantic Charter and approving the development of Imperial and international co-operation with the proviso that this co-operation should accord with Australian policy. His motion was unanimously adopted by the conference on December 15. Newspaper comment on the Prime Minister's speech showed that he had wide support and that Australian Labour's acceptance of his views on Imperial and international relationships indicated that the Labour Party had generally abandoned its former isolationism and exclusivism. Mr. Menzies, however, expressed disappointment at a speech which, he said, merely restated at great length the principles on which Empire relations had been based for many years.¹

On November 15 it was officially announced from Buckingham Palace that the King, on the recommendation of H.M.'s Government in the Commonwealth of Australia, had been graciously pleased to approve of the the appointment of H.R.H. the Duke of Gloucester as Governor-General of the Commonwealth in succession to Lord Gowrie, whose term of office was being further extended for six months from January 22, 1944. On the same day Mr. Curtin, announcing the Royal approval of the appointment, said that the date of the Duke's arrival was not yet fixed. Australia, he said,

would deeply appreciate the King's action in appointing a member of the Royal Family to be Governor-General. Everyone in Australia was looking

¹ British Parliamentary references to this subject will be found in Chapter IX.

forward with affectionate and loyal interest to his Royal Highness's arrival in Australia. It was also made known that Lord Gowrie would remain in Australia until the Duke arrived. The Government had begun to explore the possibility of procuring the Duke's appointment three months ago. It was regarded as forging a valuable link between Australia and the Mother Country during a period covering those readjustments of relationships which must be undertaken after the war.

Several important appointments were announced during the quarter. Mr. Bruce was reappointed Australian High Commissioner in London for a further year from October 7. His second term of five years had just expired. On November 1 the appointments of Lieutenant General Sir Ivens Mackay, commander of the Second Australian Army, and of Mr. Thomas D'Alton, Deputy Premier and Minister of Agriculture in Tasmania, as High Commissioners for Australia in India and New Zealand respectively, were announced by Dr. Evatt. Mr. Joseph Maloney, president of the New South Wales Trades and Labour Council and a member of the New South Wales Legislative Council, was appointed Australian Minister in Moscow on November 5. An interesting military appointment was that of Major-General S. F. Rowell, one of the most distinguished Australian commanders in this war, to be Director of Tactical Investigation at the War Office.

The problem of producing enough surplus food to meet the needs of the large U.S. forces in Australia and adjacent territories and to supply Great Britain in what was obviously going to be a difficult year preoccupied the Australian authorities. The Cabinet decided to ration meat in January. Announcing the decision Mr. Curtin said that Australian consumption of meat had been rising while that of Allied civilians had been greatly reduced and even the reduced ration was hard to maintain. The ration was to be 2½ lb. a week and 18 oz. for children under nine, which left the Australians still the world's chief meat-eating nation.

South Africa

General Smuts's speeches took up most of the space devoted by the British Press to South African affairs during the period, and they were delivered in London, where he had arrived early in October at the invitation of the Government. While in England he acted as a member of the War Cabinet. On his way he had visited Cairo and had reviewed the 6th (Armoured) South African Division, whom he addressed and warned that

the hardest and bloodiest fighting of the war lay ahead. On October 19 he reviewed the war in an address at the Guildhall.

He said that he was a far happier man than on his visit a year ago for the people of South Africa had affirmed their determination to see the war through and their resolve to remain members of the British Commonwealth. The battles of Stalingrad and el-Alamein marked the real turning points in the war and would be reckoned among the decisive battles of the world. From el-Alamein onwards "we of the British Commonwealth have done things on the battle-front which will stand comparison with the contributions of any of our allies." Nor had we seen the full fruits of what we had done. The Russian contribution had been "immense."

The assault on Europe would be our first priority and in that assault the United States would take a leading part, perhaps *the* leading part. "For no nation in history has so great and honourable a destiny been marked out by the course of events. None has ever had so high a mission of good and goodwill; on none have higher hopes been built."

But the time was short. Everywhere the enslaved populations were being reduced to destitution and despair with brutal ruthlessness. This new darkness over the face of Europe must be ended soon if Europe was to be saved. And there was a military reason to avoid delay. Hitler was no longer fighting for victory but for time, time for something to happen, for the accidents that so often upset the run of events. The answer should be our relentless ever-increasing pressure without rest or pause. The winning of the war would be vain unless the peace were also won. The pitiful mistake of the last armistice must not be made.

A more difficult problem in connexion with the peace was the problem of aggression, the last obstacle to be overcome in mankind's climb upward from primitive savagery. The issue had to be fairly joined with the earlier darker rule of force. Aggression must be finally abjured, else Western civilization would perish. It must be the Allies' firm resolve that this war should be the last. "Only the will to peace can make our machinery for security function properly . . . Let the greatest war in human history become the prelude to the great peace." To make it such would be "the greatest glory of our age and its noblest bequest to the generations to come."

On Armistice Day an eloquent letter written by General Smuts in response to a request by the Council for Education in World Citizenship, was read to the boys and girls in schools throughout the country.

Next came his much-discussed speech to the Empire Parliamentary Association (q.v. Chapter IX). On December 28, when he had returned to South Africa, he broadcast to the United Nations on the occasion of the award to him of the Woodrow Wilson Foundation Medal. He then proposed that the "Big Four," U.S.A., Britain, China and the U.S.S.R., should be recognized as the foundations of the free world on which a permanent peace structure could be built,

The enemy powers would have to wait "until under proper guardianship they have been cured of their dangerous obsessions and distorted outlook on the world." Common action between the Great Powers could build up understanding and co-operation in the critical period of growth and evolution after the war. Speaking of the League of Nations he said that so far from the League Covenant going too far and threatening nations with dangerous entanglements, he maintained that it did not go far enough, for the world, as was being burnt into men's consciousness, was one, and in the last resort the human lot was indivisible. He did not want nations to disappear, for they were facts of history on which the future international structure must be built. The sovereignty of the State would be untouched but over all there should be an international regime of law and order guaranteeing each State the peaceful pursuit of its own life. "Criminal law would be extended to the international sphere," with appropriate machinery of punishment.

It was, perhaps, true of the League of Nations that its founders were dominated by idealistic expectations out of tune with the hard realism of the times. "Our neglect to provide for adequate force to maintain security against aggression and for democratic leadership . . . placed the world at the mercy of Nazi reaction and our Western civilization in the most mortal peril." This time we should have to mix realism with idealism.

In the Provincial elections General Smuts was as successful as he had been in the General Election, and though the Orange Free State returned an almost solid block of Nationalists in the other three provinces the United Party won decisively. On November 28 Sir Pierre van Ryneveld, C.G.S. of the South African forces, disclosed that he had undertaken to form six more air units, bringing the South African air strength "in the north" to 20 squadrons. On October 20 the episcopal Synod of the Church of the Province of South Africa, representing 14 bishops, appealed to Europeans of South Africa to combat their prejudice against the coloured races, and condemned the colour bar as contrary to the New Testament.



LORD LINLITHGOW

CHAPTER XIII

INDIA

By Sir Frank Brown

Famine conditions in Bengal, occupying the predominant place in the Indian news of the quarter, had close bearing on the war situation in South-East Asia, for the province seems destined to be the spring-board of the great offensive to expel the Japanese from Burma and the Andamans, their most westerly conquests. The quarter was also marked by the completion of the Viceroyalty of Lord Linlithgow, who had held it half as long again as the normal term of five years, and the arrival of his successor, Lord Wavell, who was sworn in at Delhi on October 20. A few days earlier Admiral Lord Louis Mountbatten arrived to take supreme command of the armies, navies and air forces of the South-East Asian front.

Lord Linlithgow's Viceregal tenure was both the longest and the most momentous since the assumption of Crown rule in 1858. With unceasing application and unfaltering courage, he steered India through the most dangerous shoals and quicksands encountered in the long history of the British connexion. It was recognized that the United Nations were deeply in his debt for his energy and initiative in the field of first importance—that of the defeat of the Axis assault upon the liberties of mankind. In the building up of the voluntary army of India to more than 2,000,000 men recruiting was extended to many new classes, and indeed was broad-based on the whole country. That this departure from the time-worn policy of limiting the Army to the "martial classes" had no detrimental effect was attested by the continued further renown, notably in the operations against Italy, won by Indian troops. A gratifying feature was the aptitude shown by the Indian peasant, as by the young *intelligentsia*, in assimilating the uses of mechanization, which, generally speaking, has

only been developed in India after the outbreak of war. The grant of commissions to Indians on equal terms with British officers, first made possible in 1917, was slowly applied until the shadows of the greatest of all wars were gathering. At its outbreak there were 400 such officers ; when Lord Linlithgow left India their number neared 9,000. The number of other Indian combatant officers had grown in proportion, and young pilots of the Indian Air Force were showing an intrepidity and resource comparable with that of their contemporaries in the R.A.F.

In the field of supply India became increasingly the arsenal of democracy in South-East Asia. Her agriculture and factories sustained in increasing measure her own armed forces and the increasing hosts of British, American, Chinese, and West and East African troops assembled for the coming great assault. Both China and Russia were receiving material aid from India. The India-China wing of the voluntary American Air Transport Command, with the support of the R.A.F. and the I.A.F., flew vital supplies to China across the vast altitudes and spaces of the Himalayan "Hump," in quantities far in excess of any traffic borne along the Burma Road before it was closed to Allied use. Reference has already been made to the construction of the Ledo road to China (q.v., Chapter V, Section 1). Many Indian supplies were reaching Russia by the East Persia route—a new road, originally an old caravan way, made in eight months with scant machinery and mostly by Indian labour.

The enemy in Burma did not leave India wholly untouched as a sharp daylight air raid on Calcutta on December 5 testified. The Japanese spared no effort to suborn Indians who had been taken under their control and to train them for purposes of sabotage and espionage. The execution of four such agents was officially announced on October 6. Subhas Bose, the notorious Indian quisling, after transfer from Berlin to Tokyo, moved to Singapore, and on October 21 grandiloquently announced his headship of a provisional government of "Free India" with himself in command of "The Indian National Army."

Later it was stated that he was transferring his "head-quarters" to Burma.

World war conditions were at the root of the shortage of food which afflicted various parts of India, and especially Bengal, for the first time for more than a generation ; but the Food-grains Policy Committee presided over by Sir Theodore Gregory (see *The Sixteenth Quarter*, Chapter XIII) disposed of the allegation that Army requirements in India were partly responsible for this lamentable situation.

It showed that the pressure of Army demands fell relatively lightly on the food grain (rice) which was most in current deficit ; that the indent for the Indian Army was not a net addition to the total demand, since the sepoys were consumers in civilian life ; and that exaggerated importance had been attached to wastage of supplies under this head.

Competent observers questioned the existence of a total food shortage in the country as a whole, even allowing for the loss of rice imports from Burma, and the suspension of normal shipping facilities for imports under the strain of war. The Delhi Correspondent of *The Times* summed up the position thus :

"The food problem in India consists of large local deficits in districts which formerly drew heavily upon Burma rice, or have been unfortunate with their harvest, coinciding with the general monetary inflation, the inelasticity of transport, and the tendency, even in regions of plenty, for the cultivator to sell a rather smaller proportion than usual of his marketable surplus. This is a situation with which private trade cannot cope, and a population numbering hundreds of millions has been dependent for its food supplies upon the efficiency of Government, Central and Provincial, acting as *bania* [grain-seller]." (January 5, 1944.)

Lack of efficiency in Bengal was painfully apparent to the new Viceroy who at once showed himself to be in civil office, as in war, a man of action. Less than a week after being sworn in at Delhi on October 20, Lord Wavell, accompanied by his wife and a small staff, visited Calcutta, from whence had come distressing stories of hundreds dying of starvation in the streets, and of the pitiable condition of vast numbers of immigrants from "up-country" driven by hunger to swell the throngs of applicants for relief at food kitchens. The Viceroy also toured the worst-affected districts. With the concurrence of the Commander-in-Chief (General Sir Claude Auchinleck) he directed that the Army should give assistance to the civil authorities in distributing food in the districts, transporting destitute immigrants in the capital to their village homes, and other

ameliorative measures. From November 5, when this co-operation began, to the end of the quarter supplies exceeding 107,000 tons of grain were handled by the military authorities. Persons receiving direct aid in addition to food, clothing and medical assistance exceeded 10 million. Unhappily preventive and relief measures had not been taken in hand by the stages, and with the promptitude, laid down by the famine code as revised early in the century. Lack of necessities brought in its train, even when relief measures were fully organized, high mortality from cholera, dysentery, malaria and other diseases. There was a serious shortage of doctors to fight these scourges, but inoculation on a vast scale was planned.

The situation was debated in the House of Commons on November 4, in the light of a White Paper presented a few days earlier (Cmd. 6479, 6d.). It reproduced a detailed account of the course of events made in the Central Legislative Assembly on August 9 by Sir Azizul Huque, the then Food Member (who was later succeeded by Sir J. P. Srivastava).

At a Food Conference early in the year the Bengal Government had intimated that they would require no imports of rice in the ensuing few months, even though they were in deficit, provided they were not asked to take any extra-territorial responsibility for food distribution. This serious miscalculation was accompanied by other indications of marked deterioration of the administrative machinery in the province. Other parts of India, including the southern States of Travancore and Cochin (which ordinarily rely to a much larger extent than Bengal on rice shipments from Burma) had averted the worst effects of scarcity and high prices. The great cities of Bombay and Bangalore, among others, had successfully established systems of food rationing, but in Calcutta delay and hesitation prevailed.

In the Commons debate there were defenders as well as critics of the Secretary of State and the Government of India ; but recognition was general that, notwithstanding the desire for provincial autonomy to be given the fullest scope, Britain could not divest herself of responsibility in the matter of relief of present suffering. Warm praise was given to Lord Wavell for taking prompt action and seeing conditions for himself. Newspaper correspondents described his visit to the second city of the Empire as marking a turning point in a deplorable situation. The

abnormal price of rice fell in view of a record crop in the province and in the supplies brought in. But public opinion at home continued to be deeply concerned, and large sums were raised for relief by various organizations and localities, the appeals including one for Lord Wavell's Fund by the High Commissioner for India (Sir Samuel Runganadhan). Wildly extravagant statements as to the death-roll were made to be exploited for political purposes. In the absence of reliable figures the official estimate was that the total abnormal mortality due to famine and disease in the last five months of 1943 did not exceed a million.

Lord Wavell's dissatisfaction with the Bengal authorities was plainly shown in his first important speech as Viceroy, delivered at Calcutta on December 20. He expressed his confidence that food policy for India as a whole, on the lines recommended by the Gregory Committee, could be carried out. He added that he was prepared to take the most drastic action in support of it. In Bengal, though the situation had been greatly eased, there were no grounds for complacency. They still had to fight lack of confidence and greed, and to see that administrative action was adequate for the future. He added :

"The solution of Bengal's food problem now lies in Bengal's hands. The Central Government has provided a generous measure of assistance in undertaking to supply food for Calcutta during the next few months. But the Central Government cannot continue indefinitely to 'carry' a province to which nature has vouchsafed so generous a crop, if through administrative inefficiency the province fails to secure that it is properly procured and distributed."

The Viceroy's further observation that he was in earnest in this matter was confirmed by the announcement on December 23 that the Bengal Government had been given a "direction" from the Centre to put into force a rationing scheme for Calcutta, and had decided to accept the demand, though under protest. The Sind Government was still more restive under the "direction" not to allow a rise in the price of food grains without the assent of the Governor. At the end of the quarter, after months of non-compliance, the Punjab—a surplus province—met the wishes of the Central Government by enforcing

statutory price control of food grains and rationing in towns with over 100,000 population.

Lord Wavell's prediction on December 20 that the first six months of 1944 would be the testing time for Bengal was followed four days later by the announcement that Mr. Richard G. Casey, Minister of State in the Middle East, had been selected to be Governor of Bengal, in succession to Sir John Herbert, who died in Calcutta on December 11 after a prolonged illness. The choice, for the first time in British Indian history, of a Dominion statesman for one of the Presidency governorships was unfavourably received in the Nationalist Press, owing both to the "White Australia" policy and to the promised land of Dominion status for India not having been reached ; but all commentators were agreed as to the capacity and vigour of the Australian nominee.

Inflationary tendencies had no small share in contributing to food scarcity, and the note circulation continuously rose from Rs. 1,928,000,000 at the outbreak of war to Rs. 8,408,000,000 on the last day of the quarter. This inflation was largely due to the fact that the preponderant part of war expenditure in India falls on the British Exchequer, which has utilized rupee resources made available by the Reserve Bank of India against payments due to India in accumulating sterling balances. Between the outbreak of war and the spring of 1943 the cost of living, according to the Bombay index number (with August 1934 as the datum line) had risen from 105 in August, 1939, to 227 in the corresponding month of 1943.

One of the last acts of Lord Linlithgow's Government was the promulgation on October 13 of a "blanket" ordinance against hoarding and profiteering, and covering every article except food and grains, which were separately dealt with. It prohibited the possession of stocks in excess of three months' supply. Dealers and producers were forbidden to possess more than a specified amount. No goods were to be sold at a price exceeding 20 per cent of the landed price or production cost. A further deflationary measure was Government selling of gold from South Africa.

Lord Wavell was able to state in his Calcutta speech that the start made with control of cotton textiles in June had met with considerable success, owing to the excellent co-operation between the industry and the Government.

Medicine and drugs had now been taken in hand. There were many other commodities of which the consumer in India was short owing to war demands—such as woollen goods, footwear and iron and steel for the village manufacture of agricultural implements. Every effort was being made to obtain an increased supply of these and other goods by imports or release from war purposes. Lord Wavell added that shortage of coal was another problem which the Government was taking seriously in hand. The statutory ban on the employment of women in the collieries was temporarily lifted in the effort to meet the shortage of mining labour.

With pressing economic problems forcing first attention, the Indian political situation figured little in the news. By the first month of the quarter the number of political prisoners under detention without trial had fallen to about 8,000. Mr. Rajagopalachari, the erstwhile Congress stalwart who in 1942 resigned from the Party rather than follow Mr. Gandhi into the morass of the mass civil disobedience policy, continued his efforts to bring about a Congress-Moslem League *entente*. In a pamphlet issued in November and entitled *The Way Out* he urged that there should be return to discussions on the basis of the proposals of H.M. Government in the "Cripps offer," leaving the contracting-out provisions an open question pending the decisions of the projected constituent assembly. His appeal fell on stony ground, for none of the major parties were prepared to abate their claims.

Lord Wavell's first months in India, to the disappointment of ardent Nationalists, provided no definite clue to his ideas as to the ending of the political impasse in the Congress-majority provinces. In his Calcutta speech, however, he rejected the contention that progress towards Indian self-government was impossible while the war continued ; but he equally refused to accept the theory that the end of the war would itself show the constitutional way forward :

"For the time being I must concentrate on the job of work we have to do. The winning of the war, the organization of the economic home front, and the preparations for peace, call for the use of all the resources India has in determination, energy and intelligence. I welcome co-operation from anyone and anybody who can assist me in these great problems on which the future of India depends. While I do not believe that political differences can be solved by administrative action, I believe that if we can co-operate in the achievement of the great administrative aims which should be common to all parties when the country is in peril, we shall do much to produce conditions in which the solution of the political deadlock will be possible."

There was no answering note of comprehension and co-operation at the Christmas sessions of the Hindu Mahasabha and the Moslem League. The former body at Amritsar declared its determination never to compromise on the Pakistan demand of the Moslems. The League met at Karachi, the birthplace of Mr. Jinnah, whose reception was histrionically staged. It was resolved to set up

"a Committee of Action" to prepare Moslems for the "coming struggle for the achievement of Pakistan" in view of the "vague, indefinite and unsettled policy of the British Government towards the Moslem demand for Pakistan and the unpatriotic, short-sighted and antagonistic attitude of the Hindus." Mr. Jinnah outdid his previous utterances. "We shall never be content," he said, "until we seize the territories that belong to us and rule over them." He asked for voluntary liquidation of British authority in India. "We are now impressing on British statesmen that the only honest way for Great Britain is to 'divide and quit'."

When war broke out discussions with Indian Princes regarding voluntary accession to the Federation provided for in the 1935 Act were suspended by the Crown Representative—an office combined with the Viceroyalty. On April 16, 1943, however, Lord Linlithgow issued a notification attaching some hundreds of petty States in Kathiawar, some of them with an area of less than a square mile, to larger principalities, such as Baroda, Bhavnagar and Nawanagar under carefully prescribed conditions. Early in December the Judicial Commissioner of the Agency Court, Mr. R. W. H. Davies, and two Indian colleagues held the notification to be illegal and *ultra vires*. The judgment, while recognizing the authority of the Paramount Power over the Indian States, held that such an authority did not extend to their officers, and that the Act of 1935 circumscribed the prerogatives of the Crown.

Therefore the attachment scheme constituted "a startling reversal of the purposes and policy set out in the Government of India Act." It was understood that this decision of a Court not possessing the powers and authority of a High Court would be challenged either by appeal or by amending legislation. The existence of petty States lacking the men and means to exercise even minor degrees of sovereignty is a serious obstacle to the attainment of any form of All-India union on a completely self-governing basis.

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